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*A Journal Devoted to Scholarly
Studies in the Social Sciences
and Related Fields in Mississippi*

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IDA HADLEY BROWN

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JOHN R. BATTENWELL

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John K. Bettersworth Editor

Address all correspondence to:

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CONTRIBUTORS

Werner W. Boehm

is Director and Coordinator of Curriculum Study for the National Council on Social Work Education. The above paper was presented by Dr. Boehm at the annual meeting of the Mississippi Conference on Pre-Professional Social Work, held at Mississippi State College, October 28-29, 1955. Dr. Boehm spoke as representative of the national Council on Social Work Education, and his paper was read at the annual dinner meeting of the conference.

Virginia Owen Bardsley

holds an M.A. degree in English from the University of Mississippi. At present Mrs. Bardsley is taking graduate work in history at Mississippi State College and serving as part-time instructor in history. Mrs. Bardsley's study of medieval baggage will be continued in the Spring issue.

Ida Harlene Mohn

who received her M.S. in history at Mississippi State in 1952, did her study of the T.V.A. in Tishomingo as part of her thesis. Part I was published in the Fall issue.

SOCIAL WORK AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

By WERNER W. BOEHM

There are two reasons why I am happy to take advantage of the opportunity to discuss the relationship between social work and the social sciences. One is that I consider the link between social work and the social sciences to be among the significant and, from the point of view of social work, among the most desirable developments in recent years. The other is that this occasion affords me an opportunity to review the writings on the topic and to share some of my views about a subject which is likely to engage the attention of our respective fields of interest for some time to come.

History of the Relationship between Social Work and the Social Sciences

The very wording of the topic, it seems to me, implies two things: first, that there is a relationship between the two areas of endeavor; and second, that the nature of this relationship may contain both positive and negative elements. In other words, if there is a link, there is also a gap. The history of this relationship permits us to discern three stages. The first stage, which coincides with the days of the American Social Science Association at the end of the last century, shows a fusion of interests between social work and the social sciences and little differentiation between the two. This was largely, I think, because the empirical approach had not yet penetrated the social sciences. Another reason was that the academic endeavor of the social scientist to discover and disseminate knowledge was closely allied with his endeavor to use and apply that knowledge. These were the times when social scientists were at one and the same time theoreticians, social philosophers and social statesmen. The work of such men as E. A. Ross and John L. Gillin in the field of sociology perhaps best exemplifies this period.

The second stage is characterized by both a loss and a gain. The loss occurred in the social statesmanship, social action endeavor of the social scientist. The gain consisted of the increasing emphasis upon the application of scientific method to social phenomena. This period reached its height in the early twentieth century and is only now coming to an end. Early in this period social work split off from the social science

movement, and the social science movement itself became departmentalized. This was the period, then, of the rise and the development of social science knowledge in discrete academic departments, the growth of such fields as economics and political science, and the emergence in many universities of the United States of separate departments of sociology, psychology, and anthropology. This was also the period when the increased emphasis upon scientific method led to a decrease in the accent upon social action and social reform. In social work this period witnessed a reduction in the alertness to social science content and a certain neglect of scientific research paralleled by a concern with the development of techniques, primarily of a remedial character.

One might deplore this break in the relationship, for today it is evident that closer ties would probably have helped the social sciences to gear their scientific endeavors more directly to the problems of the day. Moreover, social work would have been in a better position to appreciate and to use social science knowledge and social science method. However, it might also be argued that the break was a necessity in the course of the development in scientific specialization which each field had to follow to reach maturation. Otherwise the new rapprochement, which we are witnessing now, and which constitutes the third stage in the history of this relationship, could probably not have come about.

This third stage, the present period, is characterized by an urge in each of the two fields to reexamine its social role. It coincides with the accumulation of a body of knowledge which, for each of the social sciences, was relatively well defined. In the social sciences, the turbulent years of the depression, the thirties, and World War II brought home forcibly the opportunity of the social scientist to use his knowledge in solving the problems of the day. The utilization of social scientists in government agencies both before and during the war, the creation of such organizations as the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues and, more recently, the Society for the Social Study of Social Issues bespeak this effort. Social action concerns have found their way back into the endeavors of social scientists.

Social work, on the other hand, was ready to ask itself whether the vast and varied experience it had accumulated since the days of Mary Richmond should not be subject to research so that social science knowledge could be abstracted from it. Such knowledge could then be made available to the social workers for the improvement of their practice, but could also be furnished to social scientists for the creation of new theory. Simultaneously there developed among social workers a thirst for data from the social sciences which would better illuminate the phenomena of social-psychological dysfunctioning which were their everyday concerns.¹ There developed a realization that the concepts derived from psycho-dynamic psychology could be enriched and augmented by

¹Kahn, Alfred J., "The Nature of Social Work Knowledge," *New Directions in Social Work*, edited by Cora Kasius (New York, Harper & Bros., 1954), Chapter XI.

relevant knowledge from social sciences. These efforts have now been institutionalized and we now have the newly created National Association of Social Workers, a merger of seven membership organizations; the workshops and publications of the Council on Social Work Education; and the Social Work Research Group, created several years ago. These provide channels and a machinery to guide and to strengthen the resurgence of the research interest of social workers and to feed into the curricula of the schools of social work those findings of the social sciences which are judged relevant.² We may note the efforts of certain schools to identify relevant social science knowledge through addition to the faculty in one instance of an anthropologist and in another of a sociologist; the considerable social science content in the doctoral programs of several schools; the efforts of faculty members, some of whom are trained both in social work and in one social science, to identify social science concepts which can then be integrated into the master's program; and the increasing efforts made to provide a rationale for the amount and kind of social science material to be included in undergraduate courses. All these bespeak the rapprochement between social work and the social sciences. The continued quest for appropriate social science content in graduate courses, the encouragement by the Council on Social Work Education of the effort toward better integration, and the expectation that one of the major considerations of the Council's recently inaugurated Curriculum Study will have to do with the social science content in graduate and undergraduate social work education, all these are indications of a new sense of partnership.

As one examines the small body of writings which has appeared in professional and scientific journals on the relationship between social work and the social sciences, one is impressed by the rich potential for collaboration. Its realization, it seems to me, is contingent upon the realization of the true nature of the two fields. The relationship is one of profession to science. The notion that social work is a profession — and hence is concerned with the utilization of knowledge derived from academic disciplines -- makes for a sound and effective relationship. It implies that the academic disciplines develop knowledge as they see it, knowledge for knowledge's sake, and that the professional field takes the responsibility of sorting out of that knowledge those items which it can utilize.³ This is different from the notion which I consider now erroneous, even though I used to advocate it myself, that the relationship is one of pure to applied science.⁴ This notion foists upon the social sciences the role of producer and upon social work the role of consumer.

²Coyle, Grace L., "New Insights Available to the Social Worker from the Social Sciences," *The Social Service Review*, XXVI (1952), 289-304.

³Carter, Genesieve W., "Role of Theory Applied to Studies of Need in Social Work Service" (mimeo), May, 1954; Hoffman, Isaac L., "Social Work Research and Scholarship" (mimeo), Amherst H. Wilder Charity, 1952; Stein, Herman D., "Social Science in Social Work Practice and Education," *Social Casework*, XXXVI (1955), 147-155.

⁴Boehm, Werner W., "Social Work and the Social Sciences," *Journal of Psychiatric Social Work*, XXI (1951), 4-8.

a state of affairs neither in keeping with the present, or even the past, reality nor desirable from the point of view of either of the two fields. For both the profession and the academic fields can be at one and the same time producers and consumers of their respective theory. Further, the notion that the applied field is different from the purely scientific field from the point of view of the quality and worthwhileness of the scientific enterprise is no longer tenable. As Ross and Hackman have pointed out:

A scientist who perceives himself in the business of problem-solving is a scientist doing applied research. A scientist engaged in examining a set of events because he is interested in these events, *per se*, and is not concerned with the direct relevance of his studies to human affairs is doing basic research. It should be obvious, but apparently is not, that this differentiation is not so much a function of the methods or techniques used but of the motivational-perceptual system of the scientist. Basic research has had and will continue to have applied significance, without any such intention on the part of the scientist producing the research. The work of the applied scientist has yielded and will continue to yield basic scientific findings as a by-product of its problem-solving function.

The same individual can and does operate both as a pure and applied scientist.⁵

Further, social work, being a profession, is more than science, hence more than applied science. It, like all the professions, is in addition to its scientific content, suffused with values, with considerations of ethics and esthetics.⁶ Hence the characterization of social work as an art is much more apt. The professional person as artist forges selected scientific knowledge into skills which he uses differentially and creatively for each new occasion. They are organically fused with attitudes stemming from a philosophy that postulates the dignity of man and the worth of each individual. It seems to me that such a notion, which was first advanced by a sociologist, Professor Robert M. MacIver, more readily makes possible an effective collaboration between social work and the social sciences.⁷ It guards against the danger of making indiscriminate use of social science knowledge and it makes possible selectiveness in relating it to social work practice. The social worker seen as artist must take the responsibility to analyze his materials and to distinguish among those concepts those which are empirically validated, those which are untested assumptions but can be validated, and

⁵Ross, Sherman and Hackman, Ray C., "Purity, Body, and Flavor: The Applied Scientist," *Scientific Monthly*, LXXI (1955), 214.

⁶Stein, Herman D., "Social Science in Social Work Practice and Education," *Social Casework*, XXXVI (1955), 147-155.

⁷MacIver, Robert M., *The Contribution of Sociology to Social Work* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1931), 1-3.

those which belong to the realm of values.⁸ Having done this, he is in a better position to seek relevant assistance from the social sciences in those areas where assistance can be given. He will, under such circumstances, eschew a subordinative relationship with the social scientist and avoid becoming a poor man's social scientist, after having been accused of being a poor man's psychiatrist.⁹ Nor will he, as some social workers in days happily gone by tended to do with psychiatrists, endow the social scientist with god-like omniscience. The view of social work as a profession and art in a reciprocal relationship with the social sciences is likely to make for fruitful exchange between the two, because this notion maintains the distinctive characteristics of each without negating their complementary nature. This view of social work and the social sciences affects the methods which the two fields use to express their relationship.

The social sciences are concerned with the discovery and dissemination of knowledge, not knowledge specifically for social work or any other profession, but knowledge about man as a social being strictly for the sake of knowledge. It is the responsibility of any profession to determine for itself what of that knowledge it can use and what is not helpful to further its endeavor. The conception of any social science as existing only to serve as a purveyor of specific knowledge to a specific profession would curb freedom of research and lead to stagnation. The fact that the professional may have suggestions to make to the scientist which will cause him to embark upon new avenues of research, and the fact that a profession may be assisted by social scientists in the discovery of relevant data does not contradict this essential characteristic of the relationship.

Present Concerns

Having sketched the history of the link between the two fields and having analyzed the nature of their relationship, we are now bound to ask ourselves a number of questions which have to do more directly with the teaching of the social sciences. Among the questions which may be raised are the following:

- (A) What is the rationale and what is the scope of the social science contribution to social work and of social work to the social sciences?
- (B) What are the most effective methods of collaboration between the two fields?
- (C) What is the most useful way of organizing the social science content in the curriculum of social work?

Although I cannot develop each of these topics as it deserves, for each of them would merit a paper, I shall attempt to cover them at

⁸ Greenwood, Ernest, "Social Science and Social Work: A Theory of Their Relationships," *The Social Service Review*, XXIX (1955), 20-33.

⁹ Stein, Herman D., "Social Science in Social Work Practice and Education," *Social Casework*, XXXVI (1955), 147-155.

least in large outline. They are, I believe, vital to the concerns of teachers and practitioners alike and some of them perhaps can serve as a starting point for subsequent discussions.

(A) What is the rationale and the scope of the social science contribution to the social sciences?

(1) The rationale, I think can be found in the nature of social work. The nature of social work is such that it is concerned with first understanding and then intervening in those aspects of human life which pertain to social functioning and social disfunctioning. We know enough of these aspects to realize that somatic, psychological, and societal processes are relevant to them. We also know that in the life pattern of man these different processes do not operate in isolation at all, but act as one.¹⁰ In the history of science, however, these processes have belonged to the fields of biology, psychology and to the other social sciences. As we become aware of the need for a unitary theory of man, we see closer ties between the various sciences than before and may even be tempted to postulate in philosophical terms that ultimately all social scientific propositions can be reduced through the utilization of scientific method which is identical for both social and physical sciences. By reducing the propositions in certain social sciences to propositions in psychology and from these to propositions of physiology ultimately they will reach reduction to propositions in physics.¹¹

Be that as it may, it remains clear that for social work the sources of knowledge are the three areas just mentioned. The nature of social work, however, being such that emphasis is placed upon the psychological and societal aspects of life, knowledge must be drawn largely from the sciences concerned with social and psychological phenomena and to a lesser degree from the sciences concerned with biological phenomena. Having said this, I hasten to add that it would be a mistake, in our zeal to embrace the newer behavioral and social science developments, to overlook the pertinent portions of the rapidly accumulating findings in the biological sciences. To sum up this point, it is the nature of social work, then, which determines the nature of social work knowledge, and that in turn determines the areas from which this knowledge can be obtained.

(2) As to the scope of social science knowledge, it is not always clear whether we should limit ourselves to staking out the areas of knowledge we need but remain flexible as to the specifics, or whether we should identify once and for all the precise content of the social sciences for social work. In my view, which is influenced by the fact that knowledge is growing and that new knowledge often contradicts old knowledge, the former approach is more promising and leads to a more appropriate adaptation of the changing social science knowledge to the

¹⁰ Greenwood, Ernest, "Social Science and Social Work: A Theory of Their Relationship," *The Social Service Review*, XXIX (1955), 20-33.

¹¹ Brodbeck, May, "On the Philosophy of the Social Sciences" (mimeo), University of Minnesota, May, 1953.

changing needs of social work. However, of the two courses it is also the more difficult.

A recent author has singled out three areas in the social sciences as contributing knowledge to social work. They are research methods, substantive knowledge, and theory.¹² You will forgive me if I take exception to this classification. It seems to me that research methods are not specific social science contributions, even though specific research techniques may have been developed in social science research, but all research techniques are an outgrowth of the scientific method which is common to and underlies all science. Further, I find it difficult to accept the distinction between theory and substantive knowledge.¹³ Robert K. Merton's reference group theory and his formulations on bureaucracy; the accumulating data on social stratification, on role, class, status and caste; the psychological theories about the relationship between behavior and personality; the social anthropological concepts about the link between culture on the one hand and family structure and function on the other;¹⁴ the economic hypotheses regarding the effect of governmental manipulations on purchasing power; the political science assumptions about the relationship between structural changes in governmental organization and citizen response — all these, it seems to me, are in the realm of theory while at the same time constituting substantive knowledge.

Does this cursory sketching of knowledge areas imply that the domains of knowledge are limited to these? Emphatically, it must be said that both a delineation of the areas which are relevant to social work and an identification within each area of concepts useful to social work would be a mistake if it were done with a sense of permanency.

The multitude of variables both social work and the social sciences have in common and the methodological problems which will continue to beset social science research give social science knowledge a tentative character. Social work training, on the other hand, will have to be alert to constantly emerging societal needs which may require new skills and fresh adaptations of knowledges and skills. For instance: the harnessing of the atom for peace-time use, and the introduction of automation into industry and commerce may produce dislocations which will result in social disfunctioning. Social work will have to draw upon the knowledge hopefully provided by social scientists, who may be stimulated to analyze these dislocations, in order to fashion it into appropriate skills used to deal with their effect upon people. This also requires of social work frequent reexamination and constant recasting for its own use of those findings which it has taken from the social sciences.

¹²Stein, Herman "Social Science in Social Work Practice and Education," *Social Casework*, XXXVI (1955), 147-155.

¹³Maas, Henry S., "Collaboration Between Social Work and the Social Sciences," *Social Work Journal*, XXXI (1950), 104-109.

¹⁴Spence, Katherine, "An Anthropological View of Collaboration with Social Work" (mimeo), 1952.

Conversely, only as social work systematizes its own processes and subjects its practice to research in order to abstract from it theory which may both give to and take from the social sciences — only thus will it develop guide lines into those areas of the social sciences which are most likely to yield data useful for social work practice and at the same time add to the fund of social science knowledge.¹⁵ My view, therefore, of the relationship between social sciences and social work is a view which sees social scientists and social workers engaged in an ongoing process of sifting and winnowing, a collaboration which will go from the specific to the general and from the general to the specific.

(B) This brings me to a consideration of the most effective methods of collaboration. Again I feel that to provide a blueprint would do violence to the undertaking. The main forms of collaboration which have occurred to various writers can be summarized under the following categories:

(1) *The sequential approach:* first identify social science concepts and then incorporate them into social work.

(2) *The osmotic approach:* more or less unstructured communication between social workers and social scientists will yield cross-fertilization.

(3) *The integrative approach:* identification of social work knowledge, i.e., the development of practice theory as a result of research into the social work processes,¹⁶ goes hand in hand with the identification in the social sciences of those concepts which will hasten the development of social work theory or which will further the development of social science theory.

The last approach appears to me the most effective for social work and the most useful for the social sciences because it would facilitate the much needed task of making explicit the social work practice theory which lies dormant in the descriptions of social work practice. It would at the same time give direction in terms of priorities for research into those areas of social work practice which, because of the availability of social science data, promise to yield results more quickly.¹⁷ Furthermore, explicit statements of the now-too-frequently-only-implied social work theory would probably make for a more effective contribution to the development of systems of knowledge in various social sciences than almost any approach.

True, it will not be easy to devise methods to bring about such cooperation. It seems to me, however, that we can afford to trust our

¹⁵Carter, Genevieve W., "Role of Theory Applied to Studies of Need in Social Work Services" (mimeo), May, 1954; Hoffman, Isaac L., "The Concept of Need in Social Work" (mimeo), no date.

¹⁶Carter, Genevieve W., "Role of Theory Applied to Studies of Need in Social Work Services" (mimeo), May, 1954.

¹⁷Hoffman, Isaac L., *Toward a Logic for Social Work Research* (St. Paul, Amherst H. Wilder Charity, 1952); Kahn, Alfred J., "The Nature of Social Work Knowledge," *New Directions in Social Work*, edited by Cora Kasius (New York, Harper & Bros., 1954), Chapter XI.

respective methodological ingenuity to find ways and means for collaboration, and it strikes me that the effort spent on charting objectives is at this juncture more likely to be a rewarding undertaking than elaborate deliberations about method.¹⁸

(C) Finally I come to the last of the three considerations and perhaps the most important: the incorporation into the curriculum of social science materials. I think it is obvious from my remarks so far that I have assumed that the partnership between the social sciences and social work is in large part the province of the faculty members in the universities and colleges. I should like to add that the representatives of social work practice also will have an important contribution to make, especially if we agree that social work research should bear upon practice. Perhaps the day will come when we can boast in the universities of the existence of service-research centers, facilities which are akin to the medical clinical research units.

Among the many questions raised by educators in social work and the social sciences there are four which I should like to single out for attention:

(1) How much social science content should be in the undergraduate curriculum?

(2) What kind of social science content should be selected by each social science department and in what sequence should it be presented?

(3) How can the social science data be integrated among themselves and how can they be related to other materials, such as the physical sciences and the humanities?

(4) What is a desirable relationship between undergraduate and graduate content in the social sciences?

Obviously these are questions which far exceed the relationship between social work and the social sciences and which far exceed my competence. However, from the point of view of social work some general principles can be stated in the hope that they may serve as guidelines.

We are assuming, for the purposes of this discussion, that undergraduate education for some persons is followed by graduate social work professional education and for others constitutes terminal education. The overriding consideration governing the selection of materials for undergraduate education, not only in the social sciences but in all fields, in my opinion should be whether or not it contributes to the student's understanding of man in relation to his fellow-man, in relation to his physical world and the universe.

In other words, regardless of what ultimate vocational uses a student may wish to make of his undergraduate curriculum, it should provide him with a liberal education which whets his appetite for more knowledge, helps him to see life as a problem-solving continuum and himself as a participant in the problem-solving process, whether it be as a citizen or as a professional worker.

¹⁸Hoffman, Isaac L., "Social Work Research and Scholarship" (mimeo), Amherst H. Wilder Charity, 1952.

This principle of liberal education can provide some guides in answering the questions raised earlier:

(1) What is the amount of social science material to be incorporated in the undergraduate curriculum? There should be as good a grounding in the social sciences as is consistent with a good grounding in the physical sciences and the humanities. I do not think that overloading the curriculum in favor of the social sciences to the detriment of other basic subject matter is conducive either to good citizenship or to good professional functioning. This has been widely recognized and led to the advocacy by most professional schools in any field of the liberal arts curriculum as the most desirable preparation for the profession.

(2) What kind of social science content should be selected and in what sequence should it be presented? I believe it is desirable to select those areas which are basic. Can we build, even as we go from the simple to the complex, on the assumption that the one-sided pursuit of a question in depth which has not been preceded by a thorough grounding in most areas of knowledge makes not for breadth but for one-sidedness? I know of a psychology department where this point of view is expressed by making it impossible for those majoring in psychology to take only a limited number of gradated courses in psychology. These courses go from the simple to the complex and from the general to the specific without, however, permitting a concentration on any one field of psychology. The effect is that the students will have an opportunity to turn to other areas of the social and physical sciences and the humanities to round out their education.

(3) How can we achieve integration of the social science data among themselves and with other materials of the curriculum? This question deals obliquely with the problem of how to maintain a liberal arts emphasis while at the same time providing pre-professional content. Rather than advocate the inclusion in the curriculum of "watered-down" professional knowledge and skill, the liberal arts character of the curriculum would be strengthened by the inclusion of social welfare in courses "concerned with the social and economic order, with social and human values, with social institutions and social amelioration."¹⁹

It has been suggested by Mrs. Kendall that such a curriculum "would have usefulness far beyond the preparation of personnel for the social services and potential recruits for graduate professional study in social work." She proceeds to develop this idea in the following terms:

A well-organized program of social studies on the undergraduate level designed as pre-professional preparation for such professions as law, social work, education, and the ministry, and open, for whatever use would be made of it, to potential members of such professions as medicine, nursing, engineering, architecture, and so on, would reap benefits which we can at the moment only imagine. Professions, thus based, could not help

¹⁹Kendall, Katherine A., "Undergraduate Preparation for the Social Sciences" (New York, Council on Social Work Education, 1954), 10-11.

but have a deeper understanding of their social responsibility. Professions such as social work would be enabled to start afresh in constructing a curriculum which is truly graduate and truly professional in character. The gathering together on the undergraduate level of potential members of a number of professions might even encourage later inter-disciplinary effort....²⁰

Integration could then be furthered by making operative in the minds of the students that there is a common purpose, an application potential which pulls together the apparently disparate subject matter. Seminars, dealing in the case of the future social worker with the social services and the social work profession, in the case of the future lawyer with legal services and the legal profession, etc., would provide the occasion for the student to achieve an integration of the content of the total curriculum.²¹ Perhaps the day will even come when the experience provided by such pre-professional seminars, initially created for specific professions only, will yield content which can be structured into generic pre-professional seminars of equal usefulness to future members of several professions, lawyers, nurses, engineers, doctors, ministers and social workers.

(4) What is the proper relationship between undergraduate and graduate content in the social sciences? The guide line, here, is much more difficult to find. Yet it is necessary to arrive at some judgment of what appropriately belongs where. The principle of the liberal arts purpose of education would postulate that undergraduate education provides know-what and professional education provides know-how. Following such a division, it becomes necessary first of all to place in the undergraduate curriculum only such materials which cover, preferably in conceptual form, the major areas of each social studies field. The graduate professional curriculum could then take concepts to which students have been exposed in their undergraduate days, develop them in depth and thus relate them to those professional practices to which they are pertinent. For instance, it is not desirable to start in graduate schools of social work with a discussion of the role of the family in American society, or to teach such concepts as class, role, status or caste. It is desirable that familiarity with such concepts be developed in the undergraduate years. It does not make for economic use of the limited time available to use some of it to acquaint graduate students with the many theories of human behavior and the interrelationship between social, cultural, biological, and psychological factors in life situations. However, to take the concept of family function and structure and relate it to the notion of subculture in American society and by so doing arrive at a better understanding of the role conflicts of, say, a Puerto-Rican boy in New York City not only makes use of advanced concepts, it increases understanding and thence can sharpen skill. To apply the concept of culture to segments of the profession of social work and the concept of

²⁰*Idem.*

²¹*Idem.*

stratification to the bureaucratic organization of the social agency, or relating the postulates of learning theory to the concepts of psychoanalysis, all this would make for more depth. It is not so much adding to the undergraduate exposure in breadth, as adding to it in refinement which is the task of the graduate program. Such deepening is at the same time, as we have seen, productive of better integration of social science content and social work content.

The Role of the Humanities

You have been very patient with me so far in this excursion into the history and the nature of the relationship between social work and the social sciences, and you have been most kind in permitting me to dwell on the content and distribution of undergraduate knowledge in the social sciences, a subject with which most of you are eminently familiar, whereas I am not. I do not want to conclude, however, without for a moment returning to the purposes of liberal arts education. If we agree that the best education for citizenship is identical with the best education for social work service, then we also agree that this education is a general liberal arts education. It can serve the needs of both the citizen and the professional because it contains materials on the social services and their functioning as part of the structure of our society, on the history of social welfare as part of the social history of the nation, on man and his works, on man and his relationships, teachings which should be the property of any educated person, whether he be a legislator, a judge, a housewife, a nurse, a teacher or a social worker. The ingredients of such an education, the portions of the curriculum which stem from the sciences, physical and social, require integration and cohesion. This role can be best fulfilled by the humanities in the liberal arts curriculum.

If we are to avoid creating what has been termed "educated barbarians," if we really mean what we say when we use the term "education" — a process of leading the student out, leading him beyond his present level, of making him see connections or vistas yet undreamed of, of giving him a sense of the unfinished task of mankind, a sense of the vast collaborative effort necessary to push forward the task of man's mastery of himself and of the universe around him — if we are to give him a sense of destiny, a sense of responsibility, and a sense of belonging, then we need to add to our efforts to cull out the general from the specific, efforts to buttress, underpin and link the sciences with the ingredients of the humanities. The teachings of philosophy and the knowledge of art and literature, the old story of man's striving to find and to surpass himself provide the leaven and the link which make for the broad view and the wide horizon. Our age has glorified the technician and is the worse for it. But it has begun to realize that while we need more and more persons with technical skills and specialized knowledge, these skills and these knowledges will spell out doom unless they are possessed by special persons: people whose work is well anchored in and an out-

growth of a mellow view of humanity. People who at one and the same time are thinkers and doers. People who can see the human condition as imbued with tragedy in the sense of the Greeks, with glory in the sense of the Romans, and with promise in the sense of the Enlightenment. In the last analysis, the objective of all our teaching is the ultimate that any human can aspire to possess: not knowledge, but serenity and wisdom. We know that we cannot teach serenity and that we cannot impart wisdom, for these are never entirely possessed by anyone; they can be acquired only by dint of blending the experiences of the present with man's past and man's aspirations for the future. But we also know that by teaching knowledge as well as attitudes, by teaching them well, and by teaching them as a whole we can facilitate the road to serenity and lay the groundwork for the emergence of wisdom.

MEDIEVAL BAGGAGE

WHAT THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY TRAVELER CARRIED

By VIRGINIA OWEN BARDSTLEY

PART I

The constabulary, with wisdom, advises those with valuables which cannot be stored safely to leave them in open and obvious places, on the theory that the human being enjoys revealing the concealed. Half the pleasure of a gift lies in the opening of it. Cookies on a plate are as nothing compared to cookies in a jar. The tensest moment of a new play is at the rising of the curtain. On hearing that a friend has made a European jaunt with one suitcase and a handbag, the first question asked is "What did you carry?" In American history hardly anyone excited more curiosity and established himself so easily as a type as did the traveling man, the drummer of the recent past, with steel cases and boxes and canvas bags that became so important no hotel was considered tolerable unless it contained sample rooms where the mysterious contents might be displayed.

Historians of authority, while attesting the fact that more people proportionately traveled the English roads during the Fourteenth Century than at any time until the dawn of the Twentieth, have written great volumes on who these travelers were, and what their business, their motive, and their ethics were. Homes and clothes and implements and work and play they have explored again and again. But trying to find what any person carried when he traveled is an unrewarding task with many of the most renowned recorders of pertinent facts. Only the gossips seem to have added these details. The temptation is to follow one's betters and quote Chaucer and Langland and Froissart at length. Without them the period cannot seem so alive, so real, but for the sake of one's own curiosity, one sighs and almost abandons them and looks further — amid the less renowned sources.

What follows is the result of a somewhat roundabout, but nonetheless, rewarding search of the fourteenth century "traveling bag."

The Courly Traveler

It is possible that the reputation of medieval English roads was ruined by people who thought of them in terms of heavy coaches or motor cars, because, though the citizen of the day may possibly have complained bitterly about their ruts and bridges, he scarcely thought their condition bad enough to prevent his using them. If the citizen were a villein and the road crossed his lord's estate, he had helped keep it passable by repairing it during his working time. If the bridge were let to an abbey, he had carried stones for it in a cart, thus assisting his lord to obtain a few days indulgence for his sins through the service of his serf and vehicle. The abbot was assured too that the bridge's state would justify his collecting a toll to enrich his order and his coffers.¹ If he were a lord, the law demanded that he keep the road through his estate. The same statute applied to the church property. In so populous a place as the city of London each property owner was responsible for the street before his house.² On the demesne of the Crown, the king took advantage of his position to assign the keeping of various bridges to sundry favorites, from whom he had received, or hoped to receive, favors spiritual or temporal, because the toll could bring prosperity to the grantee. The upkeep of roads and bridges was often considered first as an obligation owed the advancement of the spiritual kingdom, second as a duty to the state.³ In speeding the traveler on his way regardless of his destination, one but advanced his own journey toward the realms of eternal bliss, for not until modern times when statism achieved the status of a religion were the two so nearly identical as in the Middle Ages.

If tending bridges and roads and giving aid to wayfarers contributed such grace to the ordinary man's spirit, many other obligations charged against him might have been abated or held in abeyance. From the rising of the sun to the setting thereof the road by which his cottage sat brought before his eyes a wondrous array of travelers. There were the villeins and freeholders going back and forth between the manor and the common upon the countryman's usual business: driving a flock of animals, carrying corn to the mill, plodding behind the yoke of eight oxen on their way to plow the lord's fields, hauling faggots to the lord's new-fangled fireplace, hiding under his faded russet a few filched turfs to repair his own thatched roof. A peculiar baying in the distance, hoofbeats, and a sound of high voices shouting portended the approach of hunting party, either of lord or member of the clergy — though to the latter this pastime was prohibited.⁴ A rhyth-

¹J. J. Jusserand, *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages, 14th Century* (London, 1888), 47.

²Marchett Chute, *Geoffrey Chaucer of England* (New York, 1946), 30.

³Jusserand, *op. cit.*, 41.

⁴Regine Pernoud, *The Glory of the Medieval World* (London, 1950), 60.

mic dissonance as of metal being tested by a smith almost deadened the sound of horses' feet in the dusty earth as the masquerading knight and his squire, with pennon concealed, passed on their way to nearby jousts. A rap of a staff on the house meant a bailiff had arrived carrying orders to the good man to prepare himself a longbow and a supply of arrows and to hold himself in readiness to follow the lord to the king's latest war. The knock, however, might reveal at the doorway a minor cleric come from abbot or bishop to collect the tithe.⁵ A swift passenger with a pouch was surely some messenger on a nobleman's business. If he could look up from his work without incurring the wrath of the reeve, the workman might see minstrels, beggars, peddlers, charlatans, summoners, pardoners, poor priests, mendicants and friars of many orders.

In the Fourteenth Century a man might see almost anyone. In a time when much of England was still forest the houses sat close to the roads. In an age when portraits as such were little known among the populace many a simple peasant had a chance to know the features of his king -- albeit he might not know his name or number. Although the king's retinue was more complex, more varied, more populous, more encumbered by baggage than was the average lord's, he moved about more often too, having more estates to visit, more business to attend, more wars where his presence was essential, more wealth owed him in taxes that could be collected only by "living it up," more shrines at which he, a pilgrim, must pay homage as a matter of faith and of example, more abbeys to visit where his impoverishing presence was both welcomed and dreaded.⁶

When the king went journeying he went in style. His guests in his wake did likewise. For a long time during the reign of Edward III his hostage King John of France with his full quota of attendants accompanied him. One of the many French princes who were with John numbered in his train alone sixteen servants.⁷ In order to assure the accommodations of the vast throng following Edward, couriers went before buying up supplies and carrying as payment tallies to be redeemed by the local sheriff against the local taxes.⁸ Thus the Perfect Knight, the culmination of the whole history of chivalry, cut many costs and took away the value of many delinquent taxes, otherwise permanently in arrears.

Edward, a great hunting enthusiast, thought a day without hunting dull indeed. With his hunting companions, both men and women, with attendants, with bows and arrows, with horn and hound and hawks,

⁵ Maurice Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century, 1216-1307* (Oxford, 1953), 163.

⁶ F. A. Gasquet, *The Greater Abbeys of England* (New York, 1908), 76.

⁷ H. S. Bennett, *Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1947), 6.

⁸ Philip Lindsey and Reginald Groves, *The Peasants' Revolt* (London), 47.

he rode forth daily to enjoy the sport.⁹ And good King John, the willing hostage, despised by his astute deputy who wrote treaties of peace and ransom that deceived even the clever King Edward, John who enjoyed nothing so much as the mobility of life in England, got himself made hostage again and returned to travel the English roads. He was full of admiration for Edward who lived extravagantly on luxuries paid for with tallies of wood.¹⁰ He gave himself to the daily rounds of hunting and jousting and gladly joined the king and his stalwart sons in disguises for entering the lists.¹¹ Happily he lived there, and when he died, the spectacle of his last journey was a signal for genuine grief, because all had learned to love the way-faring captive king whose honor alone surpassed that of their own Edward.

Never remiss in his chivalrous conduct, the Perfect Knight rescued the lowly garter from its doomed and bleak existence in a solely utilitarian role and elevated it to the position of the foremost mark of chivalry seen upon the highways and byways of the land.¹²

Among the kingly chores the Perfect Knight performed was that of making pilgrimages to shrines and holy places. In May of 1369 when the forests were green with leaf and the blackthorn buds were showing color, he went on the sacred mission, followed by all the court, who of necessity had to go, by all the knights who were near and in good favor, and by all the lords who were near and wished to be. From king and noble as from the villein the saints, long dead and grown powerful, extracted with ease what they hardly had at all in life-homage and obeisance and gold. To Canterbury, its altars, its chapels, and its shrines, Edward carried gifts of gold and jewels and plate. To a minstrel and a harper who by happy circumstance were making a pilgrimage when the king arrived, he gave presents in bright coin, bringing his total benevolences for the one occasion to over a hundred.¹³

Even in death when he was babbling and afraid and could be consoled only by the presence in his bed of the courtesan Alice Perrers, he was still a source of largess, for while he babbled she stole the rings and adornments from his person and flew from the palace to safety.¹⁴

Edward's family was a family of travelers. In 1347 when he embarked for Flanders and undying fame as a warrior his queen, the beloved Philippa, followed him to the port, and farther; and later when the siege was lifted, though large with child, she fell on her knees, begged for and had as a gift the lives of the six burgesses of Calais.¹⁵

⁹G. M. Trevelyan, *Illustrated Social History of England*, 4 vols. (London, 1944), I, 32.

¹⁰David Hume, *The History of England* (London, 1811), II, 417.

¹¹Chute, *op. cit.*, 51.

¹²F. P. Barnard, *Medieval England* (Oxford, 1924), 226.

¹³Edith Rickert, *Chaucer's World* (New York, 1948), 259.

¹⁴Lindsey and Groves, *op. cit.*, 48.

¹⁵Rickert, *op. cit.*, 306.

It was not with empty hands that the queen went home. She bore the gifts and kindly regard of sundry numberless countrymen of hers, and as a result of her graciousness she drew to her court ten years later the pretty poet, Jean Froissart, whose hands always had ready to give what his mind so facilely conceived — a courtly poem of his day.¹⁶

When the king's sons set out upon the highways of England, the same highways King Edward constantly strove to improve, the young princes and those not so young took with them more than nature's endowments and tender hearts. One day in 1368 through the gates of London leading to the ports Lionel, Duke of Clarence, in utmost regal magnificence, began a journey with knights and nobles, attendants and retainers of all grades, with horses and carts and the following accoutrements:

Two sets of hangings for hall, four great beds with all appurtenances, the Great Wardrobe of robes and other necessaries, five suits of vestments for the chapel, with all the ornaments, to wit, a square of silver for an alms dish, two silver-gilt images, four silver basins, four silver phials, books, crosses, relics, jewels, and other like necessaries, armor, to wit, four suits of plate, three habergeons, eight basinets with aeventails, three helms with crests, four kettle hats... a trapping of mail for a warhorse... thirty banners, a dozen pennons, a dozen swords, a dozen lances, with three shields, a jousting saddle, with thirty other saddles, six pairs of trussing coffers, with divers stuff therein, six whole cloths of scarlet, four whole clothes of black, one whole cloth of white, four whole cloths of divers colors...¹⁷

And so forth.

Even in earlier days Lionel had never moved about except in impressive manner. He and his wife Elisabeth, Countess of Ulster, like the King his father, traveled from manor to manor followed by a string of carts piled high with beds, the mattresses, coverings, linens, hangings, pillows, curtains, wall hangings, floor coverings, silver, money, jewels, furniture, even all the kitchen equipment down to the pots and pans.¹⁸

The Christmas of 1357 saw the princely couple at Hatfield. As was the custom the lord and his lady in partial payment of the wages of the household personnel had outfitted the whole group in fashionable new clothes for the joyous season. Among that number was Elisabeth's new page, probably carrying the vielle he was learning to play and practicing gallant speeches as he rode along in his tight parti-colored clothes, with equally tight hose and jerkin. Among those present during that

¹⁶Columbia Encyclopedia (New York, 1941), 674.

¹⁷Rickert, *op. cit.*, 282.

¹⁸Chute, *op. cit.*, 41.

particularly notable Christmas was the duke's younger brother John, Duke of Richmond, born in Ghent. When he showed up at Hatfield for the festivities with all his court, he was about fifteen and just the age of Elizabeth's page, Geoffrey Chaucer, the vinter's son.¹⁹ At an early age crossed the paths of those two whose fate was curiously entwined thereafter, two who though separated by the broad distances of mediæval chivalry found themselves variously related.

Later John of Gaunt like Lot of Sodom served his century as its one just man by carrying his patronage to that century's two greatest and, ultimately, most influential men — the merry poet Chaucer and the serious cleric Wycliffe.²⁰ Though he may have bestowed his protection to serve his own ends there is much to be said for one whose interests are related only to those of unique talents.

For whatever patronage Gaunt extended, Chaucer repaid him when one day he tucked under his arm and went, probably from Aldgate House, to deliver *The Book of the Duchess* to the bereaved husband of Blanche, the late Duchess of Gaunt.²¹

In connection with Blanche we learn from *John of Gaunt's Register*, June 1387, an item given at Savoy showing that the premier duke of the land inspired other travel and more freight for the maligned roads of England when he wrote to his receiver at Tutbury, "We command you the tomb of the Lady Blanche, formerly our consort, upon whom God have mercy on her soul..." and to buy enough alabaster for two effigies.²² The most faithful husband and lover of the century, after the paradoxical custom that allowed a man to be both, had moments when serving his own ends appeared almost like acts of piety.

Other kings made other essays upon the roads and highways, no two less happily than the one whose reign initiated the century and he who ended ignominiously with it. After being refused burial at Malmesbury, Kingswood, and Bristol, the mortal remains of Edward II finally found a resting place at Gloucester Cathedral, and the unhappy king's travels came to an end. As a result of the satisfactory conclusion of the episode of the wayfaring corpse, the weary procession went home, but such wealth found its way into ecclesiastical coffers that church and abbey flourished.²³

Richard II also failed in his efforts to be glamorously entombed. Henry IV buried him not in the splendid sarcophagus he had built for himself and his first wife, with effigies of real likeness, in the Chapel of the Confessor at Westminster, but carted him royally off to the church of friars preachers at his manor of King's Langley.²⁴ Whether the

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 42.

²⁰Lindsey and Groves, *op. cit.*, 55.

²¹Bennett, *Chaucer*, 34.

²²Rickert, *op. cit.*, 415.

²³Gasquet, *op. cit.*, 164.

²⁴*Dictionary of National Biography*, XXII (London, 1917), XVI, 1042.

royal wretch's heart was taken later to some other spot, surreptitiously or with pomp, matters little, for such an occurrence, if any, took place after the century became, like the king, newly dead.

Only seven years earlier when peace had been made between Richard II and the City of London, the king with his queen, Anne of Bohemia, returned for the reconciliation ceremonies. August 29, 1392, was a bright day shimmering with heat, and when the entourage came to a halt the queen must have been very warm in her gown encrusted and embroidered with many pounds of diamonds and other stones. Before the royal eyes, suspended in mid-air by mystic means, was a fairy castle, and descending from the magic street to the real one came a boy arrayed like an angel, a maid in the raiment of a queen. The latter bore upon a pillow two coronets symbolizing heavenly crowns for the monarchs; the former held goblets of wine. While cheers swelled upward in the August air, the warden presented the gifts to the King and Queen. It was a triumphal moment for a vain ruler, but as he quaffed the wine, he must have tasted still the bitterness of his situation.²⁵

Queen Anne herself was something of an importer and exporter. As had the queens before her she brought with her to England courtiers and knights, priests and scholars. As time passed these men returned to Bohemia, taking with them, no doubt, samples of England's industry and art and the ideas which Wycliffe had planted, so that the first flourishing of his seed was evident in John Huss.²⁶

Despite his arrogance Richard had been faithful in making his pilgrimages. On November 10, 1387, he went in procession, barefoot, to the church of St. Peter, Westminster, to the shrine of St. Edward. However, his humility was mitigated when the abbot and the household of the convent rescued him by carrying and laying carpet from the King's Gate to the church.²⁷ Again, when Froissart, who had been sojourning in the continent, returned one July day to England with a present for His Majesty, he learned that Richard with his court was on a pilgrimage to Canterbury. He set out again to overtake the travelers, still carrying his gift, a book of "amours and moralities" that he had compiled over a period of twenty-four years. It was "fair illumined and written, and covered with crimson velvet, with ten buttons of silver and gilt and roses of gilt in the midst."²⁸

On another occasion when times were bad, as they often were with the second Richard, even when his face was fresh with youth and there was much hope for the future under the son of the Black Prince, the young King rode out with two hundred of his stoutest men to meet Wat Tyler and his peasants, bearing with him the prayers of his mother and the faith of the realm. Even the Church Militant was hopefully expectant as the monks of Westminster, wearing penitential garb, went forward to meet him, holding aloft a cross which he devoutly kissed.²⁹

²⁵ Rickert, *op. cit.*, 38.

²⁶ John Marsh, *An Epitome of Church History from the Earliest Times* (New York, 1867), 251.

²⁷ Rickert, *op. cit.*, 260.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 244-5.

²⁹ G.M. Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wycliffe* (London, 1909), 240.

The kings of England were much upon the highways in all kinds of weather, with all kinds of encumbrances. Where the king led, the knights and nobles followed. One of the fairest sights in all that age of pageantry was to see a knight go forth — splendidly arrayed. In those days of armorial magnificence one recognized the knight by his coat of arms, especially as displayed on his pennon held proudly aloft. The pennon was a small flag with a forked tail having upon it the arms. If a knight distinguished himself in battle, the tail was cut off, leaving him a square banner, and he was raised to the rank of knight banneret.³⁰

Nor were the noble ladies far behind the chivalrous gentlemen in going upon medieval errands. One such lady who died in 1360, "the fabulous Countess of Ulster and Connaught, the Countess of Clare, founder of Clare College at Oxford, thrice a widow at twenty-nine," endeared herself to posterity by sending a messenger to the king with a petition that she be exempt from a pilgrimage vow she had made, because of her extreme age — "because I am now forty." The winsome feature of the petition was that the Countess was actually forty-nine at the time.³¹

The roads were full of people in the Fourteenth Century. Kings were going from one manor to another, on pilgrimages, to tournaments, to collect troops; merchants were going from fair to fair, to the market, to the staple; peasants found occasion to go about on foot and in carts; pilgrims, clerics, hermits, monks, and friars — all the people were on the move. One ponders the question why the populace was so much on the outside in this strange century when, under the English sky, the people discovered they were not Normans or Angles or Celts or French, but English. Perhaps they sought the outdoors because houses and shops were small and dark. Even the manors were cold and smoky. Outside there were games, ball, dances, bear-baiting, poaching; celebrations; weddings on the church porch; processions, endless civil and religious processions; the knights or the earls coming and going; the meetings and the festivals of the guilds. People went out and brought back flowers, the daisy and the rose, "to hang over the door during the June Marching Watches, the Fourteenth Century equivalent of Fire Prevention Week. The maypole was dragged in."³²

And Captain Hugh de Belicampolo (probably Beauchamp) set out for Italy for the quite novel reason of leaving home to look for wars.³³

More sinister reasons sent people forth, for the Fourteenth Century was an age of disaster. It began with the murder of Edward II. During the years 1318, 1348, 1361, 1369, 1375, and 1400 there were recurrences of the plague, with 1348-49 notable for the Black Death by which possibly half the population was wiped out. Also there befell the

³⁰ L. F. Salzman, *English Life in the Middle Ages* (London, 1926), 200.

³¹ Chute, *op. cit.*, 40.

³² *bid.*, 32.

³³ George B. Parks, *The English Traveler to Italy, The Middle Ages*, 2 vols. (Stanford), I, 385.

treason of the Templars and the greatest earthquake in English history. In 1362 the greatest recorded storm devastated the countryside. In 1376 died the Black Prince, the idol of the land he left behind. Also scattered across the landscape of the times were such events as the Peasants Revolt in 1381; the Great Schism in the church; the decay of the clergy; the cost in men, money, prestige, and empire of the major part of the One Hundred Years' War. The roads of England were full of people, and despite disaster and beggary, and the faded ideals of poverty and charity, very few of the travelers had empty hands.

The Church Itinerant

The life of the Middle Ages had been like a well-cut gem, flashing color from its many facets, yet unified beneath. More like a shattered mirror whose fragments lay scattered in the sun, the Fourteenth Century, without unity and without focus, had broken against the times. With its multiple fingers in the affairs of the state, the great, and the lowly, the Church which had been a bond between the French court and the Saxon people saw changes in the Fourteenth Century, and when the transition came, the Church did not escape. The cottager by his doorway, accustomed to solemn processions on feast and fast days, to the priest going on parish duties, to the abbot going about the business of his estates, to the bishop or to clerical pilgrims setting out from home to plead before the curia,³⁴ had long since grown familiar with the strange innovations of the clergy. He had seen the coming of the friars, the preachers and the mendicants, the pardoner with his "sack full of pardons fresh from Rome," the summoner coming more frequently and with ever worse indictments, the multitude of clerics in minor orders carrying out missions sedition or sacred, the poor priests bringing tidings that removed the miracle from the mass; and finally, about the time of the Black Death the peculiar spectacle — peculiar even to people accepting penance — of ragged men who ran helter-skelter over the countryside grasping scourges with which to torture themselves — the Flagellants, who had come to England.³⁵

Yes, the Church had changed — or the peasant's outlook. And the focus of medieval life, temporarily dispersed, was bit by bit finding its alignment, not without evidence of change and disturbance. From that time it would not be Universal, but English.³⁶

As the hold of the Church began to slip, its grasp grew tighter. Matters of manners and morality, of the tithe, of the beginning and middle and end of life, of the human spirit, of crimes against it and infringement on its rights were part of the jurisdiction of the Church. The symbol of the dread hand of ecclesiastical power was often the ap-

³⁴Parks, *op. cit.*, 337.

³⁵*Columbia Encyclopedia*, 672.

³⁶G. M. Trevelyan, *Social History* (London, 1944), I, 4.

pearance of the archdeacon or his agent the summoner who served the notice he bore, demanding the citizen appear in church court.³⁷ Chaucer's portrait of this evil creature, known who-knows-how personally, can be compared for clerical villainy only with the itinerant confessor, the pardoner. The latter was especially disliked by critics of the age because, while the summoner took from a man what he more or less owed as a further obligation of a body and soul already in bondage, the pardoner took from his bag the gift of absolution required by the Church at least once a year — but he gave it only for money. When the summoner came bearing his unwelcomed tidings of court procedures already in motion and fines awaiting the sinner, smiting him on the right cheek, the pardoner, more like a vulture than a guardian angel, appeared with his spiritual atonement, striking him on the other. In those days especially every man had his price.

Throughout England could be seen, proceeding in manner befitting, the transient bishop in all his pomp — his mitre, his ring, his lawn sleeves, his attendants and appointments — all carefully stored or displayed, as was seemly. He was on his way north to Scotland, for during the birth pangs of the Fourteenth Century, after a long period of resistance, the Culdee Church gave up the ghost, and the posthumous child which was born grew up a child of Rome. During this century and those that followed, until the Reformation, the scene repeated itself. All the bishops were foreign, not one being Scottish.³⁸

The long black robes of the monks, now often thought of as being worn over the lean shoulders of passionately brighteyed men in cloistered seclusion, were then seen much abroad. Chaucer saw the monk going to Canterbury. Langland in *Piers Plowman* speaks of the monk as

... a rider, a roamer of streets,
A leader of love-days, and a land buyer,
A pricker on a palfrey from manor to manor,
An heap of hounds at his arse as he a lord
Were.³⁹

The archbishops too were familiar sights in those days; and though as a general rule after they were allowed accompaniment on their rounds, they had assistants who performed some of their duties and did much of their fetching and carrying for them.⁴⁰ In 1381 Archbishop Sudbury of Canterbury, in the company of one John Legge, adviser of

³⁷*Ibid.*, 43.

³⁸T. V. Moore, *The Culdee Church* (Richmond, 1868), 56.

³⁹Trevelyan, *Social History*, I, 46.

⁴⁰C.R. Cheyney, *Episcopal Visitation of the Monasteries* (Manchester, 1931), 131.

the poll tax, had his head carried on a pike as had his medieval fellow traveler when poor priest John Ball's men met on the plain of Oxford.⁴¹

Nor were the abbots reluctant to test the quality of English roads. In 1311 one such official set out to present his claims against the Seneschal of Bigorre who had with considerable aplomb pulled down the abbot's gallows, erected one of his own, and hanged a man — just to prove he could. The petition the abbot prepared and took along complained, not because the lord had hanged a man, but "because he had usurped the abbot's rights."⁴²

Henry Pym, when he insisted on taking pleas to the king for support "against the abbot who would deprive him unjustly of his freedom" was repulsed without succor and henceforth instead of appeals was ordered by the abbot who bested him to take a wax candle — precious wax — to offer to the Virgin Mary at high mass on the Feast of the Assumption, in the monastery of the Vale Royal every year. But only "forever."⁴³

One thing that departed over the English highways in the Fourteenth Century was the reputation of the friars, lost on the roads, and never found again even in their convents and houses.⁴⁴ One example of the duplicity they scattered broadside was the rumor possibly invented by the grey friars that Richard II was alive long after his "sweet cousin" had been relieved of his tedious presence.⁴⁵

In other ways the Church was always abroad and always drawing to the crooking of its finger the humble and the haughty of the day. From earliest dawn until the moon waned there were sounds of bells, some routine and regular, some intermittent, some announcing added attractions. The bell-ringer went through the parish to cry the usual services of the church, the births, the deaths, a lost child or article, an escaped felon, a recaptured one, a victory, a defeat.⁴⁶ Sometimes his bells warned parishioners to have ready their farthings for a donation or for obits or anniversaries, the money for which went to the church. When the mass was to be said for the soul of a brother of the guilds or fraternities, the bell-ringer made a great noise as he swung the Rogation bells and announced the call to the members.⁴⁷ When the busy crier stored away his bells, he took up a light and made the rounds to attend to lamps and candles about the parish, especially at altars, shrines, and graves.⁴⁸

⁴¹ Trevelyan, *Social History*, I, 46.

⁴² Lindsey and Groves, *op. cit.*, 13.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴⁴ Edward Hutton, *The Franciscans in England* (Boston, 1926), 207.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 210.

⁴⁶ F. A. Gasquet, *Parish Life in Medieval England*, (New York, 1911).

119.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Often by the time the Rogation bells had rung for funerals, the priest could be seen driving off the dead man's second best animal, the heriot, sometimes even the best, though usually that beast was reserved for the lord of the manor.⁴⁹ Fortunate indeed was the Church when the villein belonged to one of its estates, for then the Church had both. Even at funerals when the heriot was driven ahead of the procession by the priest another cleric would be carrying the church's second best cross, a small medieval chord in harmony with the second best animal, because the Church had such a cross to be used on such occasions. The very best cross cost extra to hire.⁵⁰

In the matter of entertainment and amusements also the Church had its share of jurisdiction. One of its principal sources of additional revenue was the recurrent church ales when cakes and beer were sold on the church lawn, competitors having been thoughtfully given an enforced holiday on the occasion. Beer was offered for consumption "for the good of the parish." At Cratfield there were five such days a year.⁵¹ A man might then carry away from the "ale" a sorry head and certain indulgences for his sins in return for the money he had taken thence in his thin leather purse.⁵²

At the scot-ales which occurred at the feasts of sowing and harvest and at Christmas the peasant carried even more: "his money, his liquor, his dish and cup, his food, and even his own fuel for the fire that cooked it, else he might have it thrown back to him raw."⁵³

In various ways the Church contributed to the full use of England's roads; and the citizen of the Fourteenth Century carried with him — by day unto his business, at night into his bed — the terrors of hell gnawing at his conscience, permeating his odd moments. "He could not escape it no matter where he went."⁵⁴ In his efforts to evade the prescience of doom he, like his noble counterpart, often went to visit shrines and holy places, undertaking a journey that meant penance fulfilled or indulgences sought, regardless of pleasure or sacrifice involved. Perhaps he, too, "longen" to go on pilgrimages. Even today the remains of the old road can be discerned because of the ancient path, the rows of yew trees, the cart tracks — the Pilgrims' Way,⁵⁵ where many a foot seemed to sink deeper into the muck when hearts were heavy.

The favorite seasons for pilgrimages were at the festival times, one of which fell on December 29, the day of St. Thomas's martyrdom.

⁴⁹Lindsey and Groves, *op. cit.*, 17.

⁵⁰Gasquet, *Parish Life*, 279.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 237.

⁵²Lindsey and Groves, *op. cit.*, 17.

⁵³*Idem*.

⁵⁴Chute, *op. cit.*, 25.

⁵⁵*Encyclopediæ Britannica*, ed. by Leslie Stephen and Sydney Lee (Chicago, 1946). 928.

and the other on July 7, the day of translation when his body was moved to the tomb in Trinity Chapel. The latter time, for obvious reasons, was the favorite. To a man with bare feet the crusty tracks of the Pilgrims' Way seemed kinder when the crust was dried mud than when ice cut even their toughened soles. Pilgrims setting out for Compostella, Rome, or Jerusalem wore a long grey gown with a cross, a broad-brimmed hat, a broad belt, and carried a staff, a sack, a gourd. He who made a pilgrimage in England wore a long cowl and hood and carried the same equipment.⁵⁶ Once at the shrine he made his oblation, confessed at least once, and saw the town. Sometimes, especially by those who had gained favors through the saint's intercession, gifts were brought to place around the altar. Replicas of arms, legs, food, and animals were in evidence hanging and lying about the shrine as a kind of medieval advertisement of the saint's efficacy, all gifts of grateful pilgrims who had prepared them with care and borne them across the distance with pride.⁵⁷ The poor pilgrim, besides his symbolic gifts for the holy places, wore also, thrust into the rope that tied his single garment around the waist, another inevitable symbol of the Middle Ages, the knife.⁵⁸

With the well-to-do the problem of going about the country was more complex. From the *Philobiblon of Richard de Bury* we know that at least those who were able to read or own books were supposed always to have on their persons, wherever they went, almsbags for crumbs and uneaten scraps of food (this practice being especially recommended by Aungerville as preferable to dropping them into books).⁵⁹ From Froissart's horse of his delightful *Horse and Hound* we learn that travelers often carried additional clothes, because the horse complains of having to bear not only the man, but his trunk.⁶⁰ And if the *Tale of Beryn*, that poem designed as a sequel to *The Canterbury Tales*, may be taken as a mirror of custom, pilgrims of rank always carried extra raiment.

The knight arose therewith, cast on a fresher gown,
And his son another, to walk about the town,
And so did all the others who were of that array
Who had their changes with them...⁶¹

The pilgrim bought a symbol of the particular shrine visited to wear on the return home and ever afterwards, if he wished, that all might know where he had been. Else why make a pilgrimage at all?⁶²

⁵⁶ *Idem*.

⁵⁷ Jusserand, *op. cit.*, 176.

⁵⁸ Augustus Jessop, *The Coming of the Friars* (London, 1888), 94.

⁵⁹ Roker, *op. cit.*, 120.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 270.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 263.

⁶² Jusserand, *op. cit.*, 160.

When the brother in a fraternity or guild embarked upon the holy voyage or undertook a native pilgrimage, the members sped him on his way. For instance, the Corpus Christi guild of Lincoln gave him a small donation and their blessing to take with him, escorted him to the Hospital of the Holy Innocents, and on his return met him and carried him to the cathedral.⁶³

In keeping with the law governing wayfarers there was one other necessity the pilgrim was required to have with him always — a passport telling where he lived, whither he was bound, why, for how long, and sealed with the king's arms — or "be imprisoned in some stinking jail."⁶⁴

The mixed motives for pilgrimages have served as a sounding board for many an apologist and critic of medieval mores, with a writing urge, but Will Thorpe when he was examined before Archbishop Arundel was not bemused. He said most people went on pilgrimages for the good of the body rather than for the sake of the soul.

They try to organize a group of men and women who can sing wanton songs; so that every town that they come through, what with the sound of their singing and the sound of their piping, and with the jangling of their Canterbury bells, and with the barking out of dogs after them they make more noise than if the king came there away with all his clarions and many other minstrels. And if these men and women be out on pilgrimage a month, many of them shall be, half a year after, great janglers, tale-tellers, and liars.⁶⁵

From Will Thorpe's testimony it becomes evident that Christian piety in Fourteenth Century England was the recognizable ancestor of the same virtue that has ennobled many a succeeding generation, mobile or sequestering.

The Traveling Army

Whereas the Church was in a state of spiritual and corporeal flux, the mode of fighting the king's wars was changing too. It seemed that the shattering process once begun could find no perimeter with strength to stop it. The manorial system, the immutable, for one good reason or another was breaking up, an event which Trevelyan estimates to be the most important of this crucial century.⁶⁶ No longer could the average lord afford the large armies which he formerly could draw

⁶³Rickert, *op. cit.*, 269.

⁶⁴Lindsey and Groves, *op. cit.*, 64.

⁶⁵Rickert, *op. cit.*, 264.

⁶⁶Trevelyan, *Social History*, I, 4.

at will from among his dependents and his neighborhood. The villein having gained the privilege of paying instead of working to satisfy his feudal obligations, began to insist on paying instead of fighting. Then when Edward III called for men for the foreign wars, the nobleman in his turn came with gold instead of bowmen, enabling Edward at least to hire foreign troops to fill the ranks of his army.⁶⁷

As the gold made its way from the purse of the peasant to his lord's chests and then to the king's, the fortunes of English arms declined and the fair countenance of chivalry, more decorative than ever before, paled.⁶⁸ Knighthood languished within the obsolescent towers of England's castles, for among the other changes pertaining to methods of fighting was the introduction of gunpowder against which neither armor nor walls was impervious. More was demanded now than the knight with the lance and the yeoman with the longbow. The castle could not withstand the siege. It was at this time that John of Gaunt in enlarging Kenilworth lightened and brightened the new structure, but built corner towers which were large enough to accommodate the cannon he had had transported there.⁶⁹

Even the knight was yielding his place to the lighter armed foot soldier.⁷⁰ So encumbered was the knight by the heavy armor he wore over his mail that, once unseated, it took several strong men to get him on his feet and put him in his saddle again. Not a few were known to suffocate before they could be set aright.⁷¹ The footsoldier's lighter arms and equipment made for easier mobility. Even without horse he could carry his own weapons, don his equipment, and take to the highway. He wore no shirt but a

fustian doublet strongly laced and lined with satin; gussets of mail sewed to it at the bend of the arms and under the arms; the arming points made of fine twine such as is used in crossbow strings and waxed with shoemaker's wax and tied small; the hose of worsted cloth; a piece of thin blanket to pad the knees to prevent chafing caused by the leg harness; a pair of thick leather shoes fastened with a small whipcord, three knots to the cord, which must be sewed to the heel of the shoe, and five cords of the heel and those of the middle of the shoe the space of three fingers.⁷²

Outfitted in this manner and keeping within him a right heart, knowing better pay awaited him for military service than for labor at home, the

⁶⁷ Lindsey and Groves, *op. cit.*, 33.

⁶⁸ Barnard, *op. cit.*, 239.

⁶⁹ Salzman, *op. cit.*, 207.

⁷⁰ L. M. Larson, *History of England and the British Commonwealth* (New York, 1924), 135.

⁷¹ Barnard, *op. cit.*, 246.

⁷² Ricket, *op. cit.*, 157.

Englishman with his longbow, the Welshman with his knife, struck terror in the hearts of the foe. It is no wonder that the *Patent Rolls* are full of orders from the king to the several and particular lords to bring in various numbers of "foot," usually in the hundreds.⁷³

In a sterner land than France this terror of the Middle Ages, the English fighting man, sometimes failed to impress his opposite number, even after all the proper moves on the chessboard of chivalry. Early in the career of Edward III, when the troops were moving against Scotland in one episode of that interminable warfare, rain fell upon the abused roads of England and the borderland and upon the army that glutted them, causing Edward's proud army to arrive ingloriously, baggageless, pennants and banners drooping and torn. Even the loaf of bread that was always carried tied to the saddle was wet with rain and the horse's sweat. Country people within a radius of miles flocked to the gloomy scene, bringing bread to sell and saving the Englishman's stomach, though his face was irretrievably lost. Finally, after a sorry showing by the army, the baggage arrived, each little cart flying its flag with arms to denote the owner. But by that time, after eighteen days of harassment by their enemy, the Scotch, with the English in despair from efforts to keep to the field because there was no place else to go, the tardy army — at last ready to fight — discovered that the Scottish soldiers had slipped away over the last of the English roads to disappear into castles and glens and highlands. And young King Edward, having met a foe with no proper regard for the rules of Chivalry, went home with tears in his eyes.⁷⁴

John of Gaunt, other princes, and the richer noblemen continued through the century to maintain armies, although they had to hire them at higher rates. Before Richard II whined away his last few hours, he had caused to be brought to him an army of men whom he too maintained as permanent mercenaries, an innovation for a king of England.⁷⁵

Almost a hundred years before, another disliked king was issuing orders to supply the army of his day. When the century had scratched but seventeen days from its calendar, Edward II sent an order to the sheriff of York, with like orders to other sheriffs, to carry "fine flour and wheat in stout barrels, also beans, oats, and malt to the King's stores and to pay the same with monies owed the King" by the sheriff's own county. Ralph de Dalton was sent with the proper credentials and instructions to oversee the work.⁷⁶

On the same day went forth orders to "merchants and victualers to bring victuals and cause to be brought all manner of victuals" for the army at Carlisle.⁷⁷ And as always, no matter how lowly their origin, supplies were sent under the insignia of chivalry.⁷⁸

⁷³*Calendar of the Patent Rolls, 1301-1307* (London, 1898), 484 et seq.

⁷⁴Chute, *op. cit.*, 14.

⁷⁵Jessep, *op. cit.*, 187.

⁷⁶*Patent Rolls, 1292-1301*, 487.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 488.

⁷⁸Chute, *op. cit.*, 45.

In 1359 when the Greatest English force in history, to that time, gathered in the walled town of Dover to set sail for Calais, every little ship bore the Cross of St. George, and Edward's flagship the *Philip of Dartmouth*, bore also the lions of England quartered prematurely, it turned out, with the French lilies.⁷⁹ An estimate of the size of the force may be gained by knowing that there had to be carried over English roads such quantities of supplies that

on landing it took eight days for the army stores to be unloaded and five thousand baggage carts to hold them all. There were barrels and sacks and chests filled with everything from meat and flour and candles to bandages and spices and horseshoe nails. There were special additions such as handmills for grinding corn, portable ovens for baking bread and boats of boiled leather for the lords to go fishing in...⁸⁰

Never had an army attempted to travel with so many provisions, gathered in response to orders throughout England, carried by bits in nail-studded wooden farm carts to designated points, until by stages they reached the ports. When transferred from the boats that received them, so great was the accumulation that the baggage train stretched out for nearly six miles and required the services of five hundred men with picks and axes to level the roads in front of it, a fact which in itself inclines one to the opinion that English roads were at least no worse than some others.⁸¹

The King himself before he left took care to see that the greyhounds were properly carried, as well as thirty falconers who were taken along to care for his falcons. To add to the gaiety of future occasions and insure historians for his exploits, the usual complement of minstrels was added to the expedition.⁸²

Those knights who stayed at home could hardly have been expected to pine and wither away. It is quite possible that some of them found their way, as in more peaceful times, to Salisbury Plain, making the good people there regret that Edward had permitted them to remain. "At old Sarum where the Tournament 'stead lay, the followers of the knights broke into houses, ravaged, pillaged, stole," and carried away what they could. In the first year of the reign of Edward III he ordained that the householders should surround the Close with a wall and obtain arms to protect their homes from the marauders.⁸³

If none but the Church and army had been seen on English roads, those highways might have had less abuse, but they would have been far from empty.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 46.

⁸⁰*Idem.*

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 47.

⁸²*Idem.*

⁸³Edith Noyes, *Salisbury Plain* (London, 1913), 66.

TVA IN TISHOMINGO

By IDA HARLENE MORN

PART II

Area Test Demonstrations

Area test demonstrations involved an entire community or watershed. Each farmer in the community cooperated in improving his farm and all worked together in improving the general appearance of the community. Like the unit test demonstrations, these area demonstrations were a joint project of the Extension Service, TVA and the farmers.¹ The objectives were as follows:

1. To develop information as to ways and means of controlling erosion and restoring soil fertility on practical farms.
2. To develop farm plans and cropping systems that provide better land use, including greater use of legumes, grass or sod crops as a means of providing protective cover to the land while also serving as practical farm enterprises.
3. To test and determine the value of mineral fertilizer materials, chiefly phosphate and lime, as a means of increasing the growth, feed value and soil protection and improvement value of legume, pasture and sod crops.
4. To determine the effect of the increased use of fertilizer materials, lime and legumes, along with other good farm management practices on the lives and living standards of people.
5. To assemble and analyze all information obtained and make it available in every way possible to all other farmers.²

To carry out these objectives, TVA agreed to supply phosphate fertilizer from Muscle Shoals to the farmer at the cost of freight and handling charges, and the Extension Service agreed to assist the farmer in adopting farm plans that would carry out the aims of the program. The farmer was to furnish labor, seed, and

¹County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 15.

²Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 13.

other items needed in his work and to keep records and make progress reports.³ His agreement contained these points:

1. To operate my farm, insofar as it is practically possible under the direction of the county agent.
2. To keep all records required to the best of my ability, under the direction of the county agent.
3. To exercise all reasonable precautions at all times to reduce erosion on my farm.
4. To use any and all fertilizer that may be supplied by the Tennessee Valley Authority on soil protecting crops and none on row or intertilled crops, and as specified in approved requisitions.
5. To pay freight and actual handling charges on fertilizer used on my farm.
6. To indicate on the map of my farm the acres to which TVA fertilizers have been applied, with dates of application and amount of fertilizer used per acre.
7. To allow free access to my farm at all times by the county agent or his representatives for the purpose of suggesting and directing improvements.
8. To allow the county agent to hold meetings on my farm at agreed periods for the purpose of exhibiting the results of the demonstration.
9. To allow a portion of each field to which TVA fertilizers are applied to be left unfertilized to serve as a check on the effectiveness of the fertilizers.
10. To use my farm in every way possible as a demonstration of soil conservation methods.⁴

At first, too many of the farmers in both the unit and area demonstrations considered it simply an opportunity to get free fertilizer, not as a serious demonstration.⁵ However, these were soon dropped from the program and more suitable ones enrolled. The work was rapidly organized and by the end of 1936 there were already 618 farmers co-operating in the area and unit demonstrations.⁶ The next year the area test program alone involved 798 co-operators in 21 subdivisions.⁷

Altogether, four area test demonstrations involving about one hundred seventy-five farms were set up for periods of three to thirteen years in Tishomingo County. In Alcorn, Prentiss and Itawamba

³*Idem.*

⁴Progress Report, Midway, pp. 14-15.

⁵Unit and Area Program, 1937, p. 15.

⁶County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1936, p. 11.

⁷*Ibid.*, 1938, p. 12.

there were five different area demonstrations including about two hundred fifty farms — nearly all the farms that lay within the watershed in these counties — which were operated for three to ten years.⁸

Last to be organized in Tishomingo County was Poplar Springs Area, which included an area of 5,380 acres belonging to 20 co-operators out of the 41 owners in the community.⁹ It included bottom, terrace and upland soils adjacent to the Yellow Creek Arm of Pickwick Lake. Started in 1947, it was to test fused rock phosphate for a maximum of eight years. Yellow Creek Area of 2,651 acres was started in 1944 with 21 co-operators out of 34 land owners. The first two years it tested potassium phosphate ash [. . .], then the area switched to fused rock. It included bottom, terrace and upland soils draining into Yellow Creek.¹⁰

Bear Creek Area tested triple superphosphate until 1946, then changed to fused rock phosphate. Started in 1943, it included 2,722 acres belonging to 32 out of 36 owners along Bear Creek.¹¹

The first to be organized and the largest of these community demonstrations was Midway Area. Beginning with only 54 co-operators in 1936, in two years it included 12,800 acres in 98 farms out of the 112 in the community. The 1,731 acres which did not come into the agreement were owned by 21 persons most of whom were non-resident.¹² Only twenty-five percent of the pasture and crop land in this area is level valley and bottom land; the rest is steeply rolling on the divide between the Tennessee and Tombigbee water-sheds.¹³ In size, the farms averaged one hundred eighteen acres — about forty-one acres of crops, ten of pasture, and the rest in woodland, roads and waste. Cotton provided the major cash income, followed by livestock and livestock products.¹⁴ About ten percent of the total acreage was badly eroded wasteland or idle crop land, about fifty percent in woodland or woodland pasture. All the virgin timber had been cut, but some good pine and hardwood remained. During the first five years, 1936 to 1941, timber sales in the Area amounted to nearly eleven thousand dollars in addition to the value of the wood used for fuel and lumber at home.¹⁵

On these co-operating farms there were 149 families with 519 people. In the Area in 1935, seventy-six were owner-operators, two were owners not operating, fifteen were tenants, and sixty-three were share-croppers.¹⁶ In five years the community made "im-

⁸Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 1.

⁹County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1951, p. 15.

¹⁰Ibid., 1950, p. 17.

¹¹Ibid., 1951, p. 12.

¹²Progress Report, Midway, p. 23.

¹³Progress in Tishomingo County, p.14; County Agent's Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 15.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁵Progress Report, Midway, pp. 23, 85.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 5.

provements in erosion control, soil improvement and crop practices that ordinarily would have required twenty-years or more."¹⁷ These improvements brought a steady rise in the status of the people. By 1941 there were seventy-eight owner-operators, eighteen tenants, and only fifty share-croppers. By that time farm account records were proving that share-crop labor was unprofitable under existing economic conditions.¹⁸

In 1938, Midway Area was selected for intensified study because it was considered representative of the Valley. A special assistant county agent was assigned to the area.¹⁹ Therefore much of the material dealing with the progress of the Valley is based on the experiences of this one community. When TVA and the Extension Service decided in 1949 to limit the work in any area to eight years, Midway Area was placed in inactive status, for it had been in operation for fourteen years.²⁰ However, the members of the community continued their study. All of the area studies were discontinued June 30, 1951, but the farmers planned to carry out more tests and demonstrations by securing materials through the Production Marketing Association Program.²¹

Certain farms in both the unit and area programs were selected as Special Study Research Farms and attention was centered on them. During 1950 this project included one unit test farm and two area test farms in Tishomingo County in addition to five farms in Prentiss and Alcorn Counties. The three in Tishomingo County were considered to be representative of three different soils and land-use possibilities. The E. H. Davis farm of 100 acres was level and produced good returns. The G. A. Glover farm contained 240 acres of hilly uplands with potentialities for producing timber as a cash crop. The third farm consisted of forty acres belonging to Frank Bowman. It was "steeply rolling, badly eroded and near the bottom on everything that involves a farm."²² The next year two unit farms and one area farm were selected for study under the supervision of Dr. O. T. Osgood of the Mississippi Experiment Station Staff and the Extension Service.²³

The exact influence of the demonstration farms cannot be measured. However many came to view them and showed a great deal of interest. It is known that farmers in Tishomingo County purchased only 118 tons of 16 percent phosphate and 443 tons of basic slag in 1935, while in 1941 they bought 12,165 tons of phosphate and

¹⁷Unit and Area Program, 1940, p. 1.

¹⁸Progress Report, Midway, pp. 5, 18.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 15, 18.

²⁰County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 17.

²¹Ibid., 1951, pp. 12, 15.

²²Ibid., 1950, p. 18.

²³Ibid., 1951, p. 16.

21,696 tons of slag.²⁴ Some of this must have resulted directly from the practical demonstrations.

Farming Practices

All of this increased activity among farmers necessitated an increase in the Extension Service staff. In addition to the assistant county agent who worked with the unit test farms and the special assistant county agent who advised the Midway Area, three men and a supervisor were employed in Mississippi to guide the farming programs of the reservoir-clearance employees. From June 1935 to July 1938 they conducted a program in agricultural training that involved study clubs and demonstrations as well as personal consultation.²⁵

Headquarters for the Agricultural Training Division, TVA, for the Pickwick Area were established by the Supervisor of Agricultural Training at Iuka, Mississippi, May 1, 1935. Two Assistants in Agricultural Training, TVA, were stationed at Iuka, while the third resided in Corinth, Mississippi, and divided his time between Alcorn and Tishomingo Counties.²⁶ Although the Tennessee Valley Authority provided the money for their work, they remained under the supervision of the Mississippi Extension Service.²⁷

During their first year, these Assistants set up twenty-one community organizations throughout their territories. Each of these groups had its own elected officials who, to a large degree, planned its program. However, the Assistants tried to guide their thinking through indirect methods so that subjects for discussion would be of current seasonal interest and so that most of them would be studying the same topic concurrently. An Assistant was usually present at each meeting to give a short instructional talk. Although they were organized primarily for reservoir-clearance employees, the organizations were open to the public.

In addition to the meetings with the community groups, each Assistant was supposed to visit each reservoir-clearance employee's home once a month and keep a case record of the man's progress.²⁸ R. E. Currie, Assistant in Agricultural Training, TVA, reported difficulty in finding the farmers at home, so he decided to call a meeting for TVA employees only each Saturday afternoon. Only a few attended these sessions.²⁹

²⁴Progress Report, Midway, p. 118.

²⁵County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1938, p. 14.

²⁶Ibid., 1935, p. 5.

²⁷Narrative Report of Assistants, TVA, Donald, p. 1.

²⁸County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1935, p. 6.

²⁹Narrative Report of Assistants, TVA, R. E. Currie, p. 2.

The Assistants in Agricultural Training tried to help the farmer in other ways than advising him in the use of his wages from TVA and instructing him in better farming methods. Mr. Currie encouraged each farmer to develop his own library of bulletins and other publications.³⁰ All three encouraged a self-containment program for the farmers. They gave demonstrations on home butchering and canning and advocated the establishment of orchards and dairies. They also distributed information on feed crops that could be grown supplementary to corn. For example, they explained that hill land which yielded only ten bushels of corn per acre would produce one hundred fifty bushels of sweet potatoes with a feeding value equal to that of fifty bushels of corn.³¹

Because the topography of Tishomingo County is among the most rugged of the areas in the Tennessee River watershed, reforestation has assumed special importance for protection of the land and the river bed. Census figures of 1935 showed approximately seventy percent of the area of the county in woodland or woodland pasture.³² Though most of this was cut-over land with many hardwoods, it was slowly reseeding to pine. In addition there was much land that was too steep or too badly eroded for cropland that needed to be reseeded to pine or some crop such as kudzu or sericea to stop further washing. Beginning in 1935 the Forestry Department of TVA supplied to farmers an average of twelve thousand free pine and black locust seedlings a year to be planted on wasteland. Just before World War II farmers were planting 167,000 seedlings annually. In the fifteen years following 1935 about fourteen hundred acres of mutilated land were reforested. During the War the organized work had to be curtailed, but by 1948 it was progressing rapidly once more. In the 1948-49 planting season, 255 landowners in Tishomingo County planted 1,250,000 trees on 1,250 acres, making this the first Valley county to plant a million trees in a single year.³³ This was reported to be the most pines ever set in one county of the United States in a single year.³⁴ By 1945, Mississippi already ranked second in the South and fifth in the nation in the number of seedling trees distributed to farm woodlot owners for which they paid an average price of only two dollars per thousand.³⁵ Since 1948 Tishomingo County farmers have maintained their reputation as leaders in reforestation. In 1950 over 1,000,000 pine trees were planted by 162 land owners.³⁶ The pace continued with over 700,000 trees being set out

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1935, p. 38.

³²*Ibid.*, 1938, p. 24.

³³Artman, J.O., *Tennessee Valley Forests* (n.p., 1950), pp. 11-12.

³⁴Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 11.

³⁵Iuka (Miss.) *Vidette*, July 11, 1946.

³⁶County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 5.

during the first quarter of 1951. Nearly 25,000 acres of land in the county still needed reforestation.³⁷

Black locusts were also planted to control erosion and to provide fence posts.³⁸ They proved to be a hardier tree, for they showed eighty-seven percent survival while only sixty-seven percent of the pines planted the first three years survived.³⁹

Technical foresters were furnished by the Extension Service and the Tennessee Valley Authority to help the farmers manage their woodlands properly.⁴⁰ These men have also helped in the first control program which has reduced the annual damage from forest fires to approximately one percent of the forest lands in the county.⁴¹

The Tennessee Valley Authority began with an initial policy of giving fertilizer to farmers who wished to conduct field demonstrations in the growing of winter legumes, the improvement of pastures and the planting of small grain and lespedeza in combination.⁴² Free fertilizer attracted co-operators and many demonstrators began to experiment to determine the amount and combination of fertilizer which would be most effective on various crops in different soils.⁴³ By 1948 Midway Area farmers alone had carried on more than three thousand tests.⁴⁴ Their records soon indicated that low yields resulted from lack of nitrogen, phosphate and potash, not from insufficient moisture.⁴⁵ Tests showed that the use of one thousand to four thousand pounds of lime on an acre of legumes would increase growth twenty to seventy percent and the use of one hundred pounds of triple superphosphate would increase it sixty to one hundred twenty-five percent while the use of both caused plant growth to be one hundred to one hundred fifty percent more than untreated legumes. When untreated winter legumes were plowed under before cotton was planted, the cotton yield rose sixty to one hundred pounds of lint per acre. If corn followed the legumes, it produced from five to ten bushels per acre above average. If the legumes had been fertilized with phosphate and lime when it was planted, the increase in the crops following amounted to one hundred fifty to two hundred pounds lint cotton per acre or fifteen to twenty bushels of corn. Summer legumes and grazing crops gave similar results.⁴⁶

In carrying out these studies, TVA supplies ammonium nitrate, phosphate fused rock and triple superphosphate charging the

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1951, pp. 32-33.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1938, p. 24.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1937, p. 21.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1950, p. 38.

⁴¹ Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 11.

⁴² County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1935, p. 13.

⁴³ Progress Report, Midway, p. 74.

⁴⁴ Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 15.

⁴⁵ County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 15.

⁴⁶ Progress in Tishomingo County, pp. 15-16.

farmer only freight and handling costs. Potash manufacturers furnished the amounts of potash that were recommended, while the co-operator provided the labor and whatever mixed fertilizers were needed.⁴⁷ As the Authority began to withdraw from demonstration work, farmers were asked to contribute more. Beginning in 1949 those just starting demonstrations or special experiments were still to pay only freight and handling charges. But as their work progressed and their farming condition improved they would be charged more for the fertilizer.⁴⁸ In 1951 ammonium nitrate from TVA cost the farmers \$47.50 per ton for use on pastures.⁴⁹ In August of that year it was still available at reduced prices to all watershed farmers who wished to use it for close-growing crops.⁵⁰

Improvement and expansion of pastures was one of the first projects to be emphasized. Few farmers had considered pastures important or in need of attention. Now any farmer could apply for a demonstration. For fifty percent of his tillable land and ninety percent of his wasteland, which was not in timber, he would receive forty pounds of TVA superphosphate per acre for three years. He had to furnish lime at the rate of two hundred pounds per acre on fifty percent of the area. He also had to buy the seed and keep records of his work.⁵¹

Control of weeds and selection of the proper grasses for seeding pastures presented problems.⁵² Once these had been surmounted, the acreage in permanent pastures increased from 878 acres to 986 acres in the Midway Area alone during the first six years of the program and grazing increased 135 percent.⁵³ Throughout the county acreage in plowable pastures rose from 12,200 acres in 1934-36 to 18,000 in 1950.⁵⁴ At first much of this was merely old crop land that had been allowed to seed with whatever nature provided.⁵⁵ In the Midway Community plowable pasture acreage per farm changed from an average of 8.6 acres to 12.0 acres during this period. Use of fertilizers brought some outstanding results.⁵⁶

Traditionally, the system of farming in Tishomingo County has been more a process of soil mining than of balanced agriculture. When a tract of land no longer produced crops it was abandoned and another one cleared for use. Before the coming of TVA, extension

⁴⁷ County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 18.

⁴⁸ Tennessee Valley Authority, *The Valley is Paying Off*, p. 44.

⁴⁹ County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1951, p. 36.

⁵⁰ Iuka (Miss.) Vidette, August 9, 1951.

⁵¹ County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1935, pp. 31-32.

⁵² Progress Report, Midway, pp. 26-27.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵⁴ Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 9. and County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 51.

⁵⁵ Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 9.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

workers and others had advocated the growing of winter legumes, but they had secured negligible response. Only when TVA offered inexpensive fertilizers did the project arouse interest. As in the pasture program, any farmer in the county could apply for a demonstration. It was limited to land suitable for crops but subject to erosion. For the crop TVA would furnish superphosphate at one hundred pounds per acre for seventy-five percent of the area to be planted. The farmer had to provide two hundred pounds of lime per acre on one-half of the acreage and all additional superphosphate. He also had to promise to follow the recommendations of the Extension Service in choosing seed, planting it and using the fertilizer. Then he had to plow the crop under and keep records of all of the work. Community leadership for the program was furnished by the Assistants in Agricultural Training, TVA, and the two high school vocational agricultural teachers.⁵⁷ By the end of the second year, 1936, three thousand acres had been planted to winter legumes, a five hundred percent increase over 1935. Summer legume acreage rose 176 percent to 16,510 acres in the entire county.⁵⁸ Experience gained from the tests in the Midway Community showed the cost of seeding and fertilizing winter legumes to be about five dollars per acre. To justify this cost the crop needed to be used for winter grazing. Then, after the legume was plowed under, the benefits from increased yields of succeeding crops for the next two or three years would more than repay the rest of the cost.⁵⁹

So popular did winter legumes become that by 1946-48 there were 11,300 acres planted to them in Tishomingo County. In this period the average acreage in legumes skyrocketed from 1.2 to 10.0 acres per farm. Some of the farmers there tried planting all of their crop land to winter legumes, especially to lespedeza, but soon found twenty to forty percent to be the practical limit.⁶⁰ By 1950 with the restrictions of free fertilizer, legume acreage began to moderate. During that year farmers in the county planted 3,500 acres of small grain in combination with legumes and 12,000 acres of summer legumes.⁶¹

Tishomingo County has the highest average elevation of any in the state, its topography is perhaps the most rugged in Mississippi.⁶² Thus various forms of erosion control are necessary. While the most actively eroding areas require reforestation or seeding to cover crops, even the more tillable land needs protection. In 1934, TVA, the Mississippi Extension Service and a large tractor company planned a system of erosion control by terracing. The Authority

⁵⁷ County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1936, p. 30.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 1935, p. 3.

⁵⁹ Progress Report, Midway, p. 75.

⁶⁰ Progress in Tishomingo County, pp. 6, 16.

⁶¹ County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 5.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 1935, p. 24.

agreed to pay an assistant county agent to conduct the work and the company was to lease equipment for terrace construction at \$2.50 per hour in cases where the farmers pledged a minimum of two thousand acres to be terraced.

Nearly three thousand acres were offered by co-operating farmers and the work began in December 1934. Adverse weather conditions retarded progress during the first year. Through the summer little could be accomplished because the crop land was in use. Nevertheless 124 miles of terraces were built on 844 acres of 20 farms. The average cost was \$1.37 per acre, less than the price of one sack of good commercial fertilizer. This included all surveying and construction costs except for outlets and fills. When farmers not in this program showed interest in building and maintaining their own terraces with home equipment the members of the TVA and Extension Service staff at Iuka conducted three terracing and terrace-maintenance demonstrations in November, 1935.⁶³

During 1936 terrace building increased more than three hundred percent.⁶⁴ In the Midway Area, in 1935, there were less than six hundred acres of terraced land with nearly twenty-five hundred acres needing terraces.⁶⁵ By 1946-48 over twenty-seven hundred acres had been terraced.⁶⁶ Throughout the county the acreage with properly maintained terraces increased from 2,600 acres in 1934-36 to 16,400 acres in 1946-48 out of a total of over 40,000 acres of rolling land in cultivation. Another ten thousand acres had fairly good systems by 1948.⁶⁷ Work has continued since then with over 3,000 additional acres being terraced in 1950, making a total of nearly 26,000 acres in the county.⁶⁸ Most of these terraces have been built and maintained by homemade tractor or mule-drawn equipment. Many of the fields are so small that the use of large power equipment would have been impractical.⁶⁹

Cotton and corn were the traditional cash crops in Tishomingo County. Not only were they depleting the soil, but in the economic depression of the 1930's their prices were very low and the government, through the AAA, was attempting to cut surplus production by reducing the acreage planted to them. Thus, in an effort to encourage their abandonment, TVA furnished the demonstration farmer free phosphate for all crops except these.⁷⁰ However, the farmers continued to rely on cotton as their chief source of cash income.

⁶³*Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 1936, p. 3.

⁶⁵Progress Report, Midway, p. 56.

⁶⁶Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 16.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁸County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, pp. 5, 35.

⁶⁹Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 6.

⁷⁰Narrative Report of Assistants, TVA, S. P. Dent, p. 1.

The soils and topography of the area often made it impossible to practice proper crop rotation. On a particular field the farmers had to plant whatever crop was most productive.⁷¹ However, some could be shifted to better adapted soils and some substitutions were made. Cotton was changed from lower fields to better drained ones, while corn was planted on the wet soil. Lespedeza was planted in place of beans or peas. Sericea or kudzu was introduced for use on upland fields that were not reforested.⁷² Kudzu was found to be the best crop for erosion control. Kudzu crowns can be sold, thus producing an income even from waste land.⁷³

Before the introduction of TVA very little fertilizer had been used except a little barnyard manure on truck patches.⁷⁴ Results of fertilization were soon apparent, and farmers began to buy it for their row crops or for cotton and corn planted immediately after fertilized legumes had been plowed under. In 1938 unit demonstration farmers gathered 303 pounds of lint cotton per acre though the county average was only 179 pounds.⁷⁵ Yields continued to increase while acreages in cotton decreased until in 1946-48 Tishomingo County farmers were producing annually 3,000 more bales of cotton on 2,600 less acres than in 1934-36. This increased yield and general price increases caused the average annual income from cotton and cottonseed to rise from \$645,000 to \$2,018,000 during this period. In the Midway Area cotton acreage decreased from 10.5 to 8.6 acres per farm, but in 1948 each farmer was getting two more bales of cotton than he had in 1934.⁷⁶

Tishomingo County farmers have probably learned more about the production of corn than about any other crop.⁷⁷ Until 1943 little fertilizer was used on corn. In that year TVA made ammonium nitrate available to use as a side dressing. Yields soared from approximately fifteen bushels to thirty bushels per acre.⁷⁸ In 1949 and 1950 average per acre yield was thirty-five bushels. The greatest yield per acre in 1950 was 1953 bushels.⁷⁹ Corn acreage in Midway Area decreased from 14.8 to 13.5 acres per farm in the fifteen-year period, yet farmers in 1946-48 were gathering a crop of 508 bushels each compared to the average of 214 bushels in 1934-36. They have discovered that with the proper amounts of fertilizer, especially nitrogen, and good seed they can consistently produce seventy-five to one hundred bushels of corn per acre.⁸⁰

⁷¹Progress Report and Farm Business Summary, 1938, p. 22.

⁷²Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 14.

⁷³Progress Report, Midway, p. 40.

⁷⁴Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 17.

⁷⁵Progress Report and Farm Business Summary, 1938, p. 19.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 7, 12, 18.

⁷⁷County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 42.

⁷⁸Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 9.

⁷⁹County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, pp. 5, 45.

⁸⁰Progress in Tishomingo County, pp. 18-19.

Much of the strip of land around the lakes which TVA owns is leased to farmers on adjoining lands for specified uses. In 1938 eight contracts were made with farmers for lespedeza seeding and seed saving and one for hay saving. Twelve others entered into an agreement for one hundred acres of pasture.⁸¹ About four hundred acres of TVA land are available in Tishomingo County for leasing on an annual basis. In 1947 twenty farmers were using tracts of it for pasture and crop land.⁸² Some of the land was withdrawn or sold for cabin sites so that by 1950 seventeen farmers were leasing approximately 283 acres. About thirty percent of this was in corn and cotton. Most of the remainder was pasture land.⁸³

Livestock and its products have received special emphasis under the new program. In Midway alone twenty-four small dairies were started during the first six years. Sale of livestock and its products soon accounted for thirty percent of the cash income of these farmers and over half of the products grown and consumed on the farm.⁸⁴ Between 1934-36 and 1946-48 the average annual total livestock income increased from \$226 to \$631. Some of this was a result of price increases, but much of it came from improved pastures and increased production.⁸⁵

Before 1935 there were very few hogs raised as farmers could buy pigs in Alabama for meat at three dollars or less per head. However, by 1935 the Midway Area had twenty-five brood sows. Chickens too were raised for family use only in small flocks of about forty hens.⁸⁶

By 1950 five hundred farmers in the county were selling milk or cream. At least ninety-two farmers were participating in the artificial insemination program. That year seven new Grade-A barns and two pasteurizing plants were erected.⁸⁷

As the tractor came into use workstock in the county decreased from 3,600 to 1,500 during the decade of the 1940's. Farmers are still experiencing difficulties in determining which size and type of tractor best suits this area. There has been a great deal of selling and trading of second-hand tractors.⁸⁸

With increasing prosperity, Tishomingo farmers have become active in repairing and remodeling their homes. In 1935 only two of one hundred seventy-one dwellings in Midway Area were classified as "A" grade and ten as "B" grade. During the next six years Midway farmers built fifteen new houses and remodeled and repaired

⁸¹County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1938, pp. 16-17.

⁸²Iuka (Miss.) Vidette, October 23, 1947.

⁸³County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1951, p. 16.

⁸⁴Progress Report, Midway, pp. 6, 88.

⁸⁵Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 20.

⁸⁶Progress Report, Midway, pp. 93, 96.

⁸⁷County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 6.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 36.

eighty-one others. They also built twenty new barns, seventeen poultry houses and twenty-three other buildings. Eighteen buildings were painted with a mixture of motor oil, red oxide and chrome green at a total cost of \$14.20. Community leaders felt that these improvements helped "to restore or create a sense of pride in the farm as a place to live." Farmers now wanted to stay on the farm and develop a home there.⁸⁹

After the close of World War II a great building boom has occurred throughout the county. During 1950 the Extension Service gave advice and assistance on the following:⁹⁰

New Homes	86
Remodeled Homes	82
Sewage Systems	30
New Barns	123
Remodeled Barns	107
Screening Homes	890

Some progress has been made in getting farmers to produce more of their own food and a greater variety of it. They had tended to neglect summer and fall gardens and had not canned enough foodstuffs.⁹¹ A former insignificant interest in fruit production has gradually grown until in 1950 a thousand fruit trees were purchased and set out.⁹²

A co-operative experimental project on the farm of J. A. Coker, near Yellow Creek, has involved an attempt to provide irrigation during dry weather from the numerous streams and springs. In 1950 TVA furnished an electric pumping plant and about one thousand feet of aluminum pipe with fittings to sprinkle water on any part of the farm. However above normal rainfall that season caused results of the experiment to be inconclusive. Also there were many springs and seepy areas that would have to be drained before the irrigation system could be used to best advantage.⁹³

The value of the Tennessee Valley Authority's work in Mississippi lies in helping the farmer to work out his own problems, not in solving them for him.⁹⁴ The farmers proved willing and anxious to co-operate in revising their farming procedures. Both county agents and farmers soon saw the value of keeping detailed accounts and working out plans. All affected parties seem to have become more and more enthusiastic about the whole program.⁹⁵

⁸⁹Progress Report, Midway, pp. 101-102, 108.

⁹⁰County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 36.

⁹¹Progress Report, Midway, p. 98.

⁹²County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 6.

⁹³Ibid., pp. 34-36.

⁹⁴Unit and Area Program, 1937, p. 15.

⁹⁵Ibid., 1938, p. 14 and 1939, p. 10.

What TVA has meant to the farmers may be illustrated by relating some facts about several representative ones. T. B. Moreland, test demonstration farmer in Prentiss County, once managed the county home after he had been unable to earn a living on his forty-acre farm. He returned to the farm in 1938 after he saw the yields a neighbor was getting as a result of the demonstration program. With TVA fertilizer and advice from the assistant county agent he began to improve his land. In 1947 he proudly reported that he had one daughter in her second year at college and another completing high school and that he had saved \$3,000 for their education.⁹⁶

B. O. White's farm is in the west central part of Tishomingo County. When it was selected as a unit demonstration farm, it had ninety-two acres. Later he bought fifty acres of adjoining land. Forty-eight acres are valley land, the rest is hill land.

From 1935 to 1941 White changed his farm from cotton to dairy and some cotton production. His cattle and milk sales in 1941 brought him an income of \$444. Through fertilization and inter-planting with legumes, his corn yields had increased from twenty-three to forty bushels per acre. His herd of cattle had increased from six inferior animals to fourteen of much better quality. After his pasture was improved, it provided for his livestock and for some belonging to his neighbor. Between 1939 and 1941 his house was repaired and repainted and the kitchen remodeled. Electricity was installed and a refrigerator, washer, iron, radio and clock were purchased. By using timber cut from his farm woodland, White also built a new barn at a total cost of \$159.47. A mower, a rake, and a pneumatic-tired wagon were added to the farm equipment in 1941.⁹⁷ White tells his story in these words:⁹⁸

Before TVA most of my land was unterraced new ground. It made about 15 or 20 bushels of corn and about a half bale of cotton per acre.

I did not have any pasture except a black jack hill. My cows were scrubs giving about one to one and a half gallons of milk a day for about 200 days in the year...

We had a county agent, but he could not visit all the farms and we did not know how to use him. He would tell us about good pastures, good livestock and how to improve our land. But we did not understand and did not have anything to do with him.

⁹⁶ Tennessee Valley Authority, *Food at the Grass Roots* (Knoxville, 1947), p. 74.

⁹⁷ *Progress Report and Farm Business Summary on Unit Test Demonstration Farm of B. O. White, Tishomingo County, Mississippi, 1938-1941*, pp. 3-21.

⁹⁸ Mississippi Extension Service, *Farm Improvement Program on 103 Unit Test Demonstration Farms Alcorn, Prentiss & Tishomingo Counties, Mississippi*, Extension Bulletin 136 (State College, 1947), p. 16.

About this time TVA came along. The representatives came out and put on some programs at the school house. They would get someone to come make music, and they would put on a picture show. They had to do this to get anyone out to the meeting. They began to teach us a few things about how to farm and they would visit in our home... They would test our soil and tell us what kind of fertilizer we ought to use and what crop would grow best in different fields. They would take us in their car and visit other farms where they had good pastures and made good crops...

In my home now we have electric lights, washing machine, refrigerator, radio, daily paper, two county papers, dairy magazines and a lot of farm papers. We have a living room suite, and our house is painted. I have a good barn. My old worn out land makes from 40 to 50 bushels of corn per acre. My cows give from 2 to 5 gallons of milk a day for 305 days a year.

Another successful demonstration farmer is C. W. Armstrong who has thirty-two acres of upland and twenty-two acres of bottom land in the Southern part of the county. Between 1936 and 1939 he painted his house and barn; built and painted a combination potato-smokehouse, a sanitary toilet and a feed house for poultry; constructed a concrete walk leading to the house and the outhouses from the road, and sodded and landscaped the lawn.⁹⁹ In 1937 Armstrong became sweepstakes winner of the Plant-to-Prosper Contest.¹⁰⁰

Electrification

The city of Tupelo, Mississippi, became the first municipality to receive TVA electricity. Beginning in March 1934 the 1,335 consumers there paid 1.6 cents per kilowatt-hour. These rates resulted in a saving of fifty-five percent to residential, fifty-eight percent to commercial and forty-eight percent to industrial customers. Soon afterwards farmers in Alcorn County organized a co-operative for the distribution of TVA power.¹⁰¹ By mid-1950, sixty-two miles of electric lines were under construction in Mississippi and one hundred nine had been completed.¹⁰²

During World War II the electrification program was not expanded, but in 1941 Midway Area alone boasted eighteen homes with

⁹⁹Progress Report and Farm Business Summary on Unit Test Farm of C. W. Armstrong, Tishomingo County, Mississippi, 1936-1939, pp. 1,17.

¹⁰⁰Interview with C. M. Chafee, April 5, 1952; Progress Report and Farm Business Summary of Unit Test Farm of C.W. Armstrong, Tishomingo County, Mississippi, 1936-1939, p. 9.

¹⁰¹Tennessee Valley Authority, *Annual Report*, 1954, pp. 31-32.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, 1935, p. 30.

electricity. Twelve of these had refrigerators.¹⁰³ Seven years later ninety-five percent of the homes in the Area had electric power. At this time the 440 miles of rural lines served 2,349 rural patrons throughout the county with 2,000 more waiting to be connected as soon as construction was completed.¹⁰⁴ Most of these were members of the Tishomingo County Electric Power Association which was formed in 1934 with the help of TVA. In 1948, six hundred of its members had electric washing machines, two hundred had changed to electric stoves and over one hundred owned running water systems.¹⁰⁵

Rapid expansion continued as materials became available. In 1950, 63.8 miles of new lines were completed. Farmers in Tishomingo County spent over \$300,000 that year improving their homes and purchasing electrical equipment.¹⁰⁶ Completion of another twenty-six miles the next year brought electricity to ninety-eight percent of all farm people in the county.¹⁰⁷ In 1950 the 4,200 consumers of the Tishomingo County Electric Power Association used a total of 9,000,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity or an average of 1,800 per home.¹⁰⁸

General Changes

TVA assisted in the early formation of community agricultural clubs by sponsoring educational or recreational motion pictures and paying the Assistants in Agricultural Training who directed the work.¹⁰⁹ Out of the group at Midway grew the Tishomingo County Farm Improvement Association.¹¹⁰ This is an organization chartered under Mississippi laws to help the farmers. Its purpose as stated in the charter is:

To cooperate with the Mississippi Agricultural Extension Service and other State and Federal Agencies in the conduct of unit and area test demonstration farms involving the storage, distribution and use of fertilizer materials along with soil management, livestock and agronomic practices as a means of obtaining and distributing information of value to farmers.¹¹¹

¹⁰³Progress Report, Midway, p. 111.

¹⁰⁴Progress in Tishomingo County, pp. 21, 24.

¹⁰⁵Iuka (Miss.) Vidette, December 9, 1948.

¹⁰⁶County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, pp. 5, 7.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 1951, p. 28.

¹⁰⁸Iuka (Miss.) Vidette, June 14, 1951.

¹⁰⁹Narrative Report of Assistants, TVA, Donald, pp. 5-6.

¹¹⁰Progress in Tishomingo County, p. 13.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 22.

The number of its patrons has increased from 125 in 1942 to 4,760 in 1948. Some of its net assets are used as a revolving fund to finance purchases of seeds, fertilizer and other materials needed by its patrons. For example, in 1948 it bought quantities of several different kinds of fertilizers, insecticides and seeds for the members. It also sold 20,000 bushels of corn for them and placed 3,800 bales of cotton in loan.¹¹² It stores and distributes these materials for the farmers. It also pays a large part of the expenses of the County Agent's Office.¹¹³ By 1951 the group had 6,000 members and net assets of \$80,000. That year it distributed dividend checks totaling \$7,800.¹¹⁴

Recreation facilities have expanded in the county. In 1947 TVA announced that it would sell cabin sites at the fishing and picnicking area known as Eastport Landing.¹¹⁵ An area totaling 109 acres was set aside for a commercial recreational site. Concrete-block houses were constructed for sale or for rent. Altogether 125 lots were sold as cabin sites or for recreational purposes along Pickwick Lake shores in Tishomingo County during 1948 and 1949 at prices varying from \$250 to \$2,100. More were to be sold in 1951.¹¹⁶

Tishomingo State Park has been developed on a tract of seven hundred acres four and one-half miles southeast of the town of Tishomingo. It contains an intensive-use area with administration building and cabins and a network of trails leading to various points commanding good views of the surrounding country.¹¹⁷

Summary

By 1950 the living standard of all the 2,343 farm operators in Tishomingo County had been considerably affected by the Tennessee Valley Authority and other New Deal measures. Others in the county likewise received the benefits of lower rates for electricity, and they profited from the increased purchasing power of the rural population.

Over four hundred farmers received direct cash income from employment in reservoir clearance. They were advised in ways of spending this to improve their farming operations. Employment preference was given to those families who would be forced to relocate or readjust because the Pickwick reservoir flooded all or part of their land. Nearly 160 families had to leave their farms for this reason, but so generous were the prices paid by TVA for the

¹¹²*Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹¹³County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, p. 9.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 1951, p. 46.

¹¹⁵Iuka (Miss.) *Vidette*, April 3, 1947.

¹¹⁶County Agent's Annual Report, Tishomingo County, 1950, pp. 19, 55.

¹¹⁷Tennessee Valley Authority, *Scenic Resources*, p. 118.

land and so helpful were the special assistant county agents who aided with their relocation and readjustment that most reported they were better satisfied in their new homes.

Through unit and area demonstration farms new and improved methods of farming have come into the county. Approximately one thousand farmers have participated in this program at one time or another. Neighboring farmers have seen the results which were obtained by proper fertilization and care, and they have also adopted these practices. Special agricultural extension workers were paid by TVA to direct the projects.

Since seventy percent of the county is covered with trees and some of the rest is so steep it should have trees on it for erosion control, reforestation has assumed major importance. At first TVA furnished trees and planted them if the farmers would agree to care for them for five years. When the Civilian Conservation Corps disappeared, farmers undertook the task of planting the seedlings as advised by the extension workers. Over fourteen hundred acres of mutilated land alone have been reforested.

Fertilizers for pastures and legumes were furnished by TVA to the demonstration farmers at nominal prices. When these legumes were plowed under, yields from crops immediately following increased from five to ten bushels of corn and one hundred fifty to two hundred pounds of lint cotton per acre. With the use of ammonium nitrate, corn production in the county has risen from fifteen bushels per acre in 1935 to thirty-five in 1950. Fertilized pastures showed similar gains. With this encouragement, farmers in the county have increased their plowable pastures by six thousand acres. Acreage in winter legumes rose from about six hundred in 1935 to over eleven thousand in 1948.

With the availability of some power equipment and much emphasis on home-built terraces, the amount of properly terraced land in Tishomingo County has increased ten-fold from 2,600 acres in 1934 to 26,400 by 1950. Much work still needs to be done for there are over 40,000 acres of rolling crop land in the county.

Increasing prosperity has brought a building boom to the county. In 1950 alone 168 farmers built new homes or remodeled their old ones while 890 screened their dwellings. Rural lines now bring electricity to ninety-eight percent of the farmers in the county where only a handful had it in 1935. Over four thousand new families have received it during the last ten years.

TVA purchased a strip of land around the lake to maintain the lake shore and to avoid breaking up farm units. In 1950 nearly three hundred acres of this was leased to adjoining farmers for pasture and crop land. Portions of it are being sold for cabin sites. An area of 109 acres at Eastport Landing has been designated as a commercial recreation site.

Material benefits have been accompanied by many intangible ones that cannot be pictured by statistics but may be sensed in the

attitudes of the people. With greater prosperity has come a new initiative and sense of purpose among the farmers. Effects of this are expressed in the new county library and the various community groups. Tishomingo farmers are proud of their homes and their farms and are eager to relate their experiences in improving them. Just how many of these changes both tangible and intangible are direct results of the activities of the Tennessee Valley Authority is difficult to measure, for various other New Deal measures and a world war have improved the economy throughout the whole country. However, the Tennessee Valley Authority has consistently advanced at a faster rate than the rest of the nation.

"JAMES STREET'S SOUTH"

A REVIEW¹

By JOHN K. BETTERSWORTH

The best-known work of the late James Street, if not his best writing, was in the realm of quasi-historical fiction, mostly about the South. Nevertheless, his literary career actually began and ended without benefit of novel. The collection of essays that comprise Street's first book, *Look Away!*, and his last, *James Street's South*, are a first and last will and testament to a land that was the writer's perennial hero, in novels or out.

Not that Street always had good to say of his South, for he could criticize as well as praise. He did, however, realize that the South, whatever it is, and Southerners, whatever they are, defied categorization — even by Southerners themselves. Despite a valiant attempt to define and characterize his own South in an essay selected by his son to begin the posthumous volume, Street himself could arrive at no satisfactory delineation of his elusive and controversial subject. Of one thing he was convinced: Neither the South nor Southerners were what they had been written up to be. "A Southerner," he wrote with becoming wisdom, "is a man who doesn't read many books but is born with sense enough to know that Steinbeck's *Cannery Row* is not all the Pacific coast, that Sinclair's *The Jungle* is in the Midwest and the Midwest not in *The Jungle*, that Weidman's *I Can Get It For You Wholesale* is not typical of the Northeast," but is utterly "flabbergasted by folks who think all the South is in Faulkner's *Sanctuary*."

In his changing and tormented South, Street found escape in the hardly-ever land of fiction. Perhaps the fiction in his historical novels was nearer the realities of the South he portrayed than the so-called history in them. Certainly, Street could take fantastic liberties with historical fact; such as, for example, his perpetuation in *Top Roots* of the legend of the secession of Jones County from the Confederacy. Yet, whether spinning yarns or not, Street could summon the spirits of the past from the grave with telling effect, even if he mixed up the bodies.

In his last years Street did penance by devoting enough time to straight history to seek admission to an historian's heaven. Unfortu-

nately, however, as in most cases of penance, original sin reared its ugly head time and time again, so that Street was continually falling from historical grace. Considering himself somewhat of a popularizer of history, Street set about the task of doing the history of the United States in such a way that it might be "understanded of the people." Relying too much on secondary works, second-hand rumors, and a prime imagination, Street once more did history much disservice. His attempted "popular history" was more popular than it was history. Like the usual journalist of his day, he chose to embroider the past just as he did the present.

What Street really was — and perhaps he had come to realize this fact — was an essayist. *Look Away!* demonstrated this particular talent, albeit somewhat in the rough, for this work was Street's first avocational excursion from newspaper writing. Ironically enough, Street later came to be ashamed of *Look Away!*, which doubtless reminded him too much of humble literary beginnings. Actually, he should have been ashamed of being ashamed, for this first major writing effort pointed to the literary genre in which he excelled. Not that he could have made much of a living out of it, though.

Once Street had earned for himself a comfortable living from his novels, which were just trashy enough to be best sellers, he could settle down to the gentler prose of the essayist. When he finally was graduated from the university of hard novels, he found himself promoted from the newspaper to the magazine. He now set about the writing of articles. Since the major qualification for authorship of the sort of non-fiction currently fancied by the slick-paper monthlies seems to be the possession of a certain notoriety in the annals of fictioneering, Street could at last become an elder literary statesman and an essayist.

A sketch of Vicksburg in the *Saturday Evening Post* moved the Curtis publications to lift him to the seventh heaven of *Holiday*. An open-ended series on Southern cities was the result. When Street died, his son gathered these urban essays together to form the major content of *James Street's South*. Fortunately this "Curtis' tour" was supplemented with a generous leaven from *Look Away!*, together with several odds and ends James Street Jr. found lying around in a hitherto unpublished state. Among these last was an early eulogistic piece on the *Arkansas Gazette*.

James Street's South is, then, a collection of extended sketches of Southern cities like Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, New Orleans, and Mobile. Yet, the whole countryside finds its way into the chapters of Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Central Florida, the Great Smokies, and the Southern rivers.

The urban sketches, particularly when they deal with the newer cities, suggest second-hand, or at best, hurried observation, and they sometimes lapse into second-rate writing. Actually, the South that Street knew inside-out and could write about with conviction was the rural South of his youth — the youth of a backslid parson turned reporter, living recklessly all over the place and recording everything he

saw and heard, from the legends of John Henry to the stark realities of Goat Castle.

This was the South of *Look Away!* — a various, colorful country that Street had known from all sides, including the seamy. The writing was hasty, just as if it had barely beaten a newspaper deadline; but it was earthy and full of life. It was not timeless; but it was timely. No one would have called it literary; but it could become his major claim to survival in the field of letters.

In the end, James Streethied himself off to the Southern metropolis to do a city edition of *Look Away!* Perhaps, by this time he had become a more polished writer — even a coated-paper essayist. But the city-slick somehow never became this literary country-jake. When he was really being himself, whether in novel or essay, he was writing for the pulps.

